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NMCH plans 'Market @ the Museum' event

The staff at the North Manchester Center for History (NMCH), 122 E. Main St., North Manchester, has been working on its last event for 2020, "Market @ the Museum," which lasts through Saturday, Dec. 12. Market hours will be the same as the regular museum hours, which are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays.

Wabash Marketplace announces Downtown Bucks giveaway

The popular "Stamping Map" during Downtown Holiday Night to Remember is being replaced with a new program called "Shop Local to Win." Wabash Marketplace is giving away \$1,000 over four weeks.

See PULSE, page A3

Inside

Classified, A8 Sports, A9
Comics, A6 Viewpoint, A7
Crossword, A6 Weather, A2
Obituaries, A3



Wabash Friends Church free COVID-19 testing site extended through Friday

ISDH reports two additional local deaths Saturday, bringing Wabash County's total to 27

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

On Saturday, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) reported two more local COVID-19 deaths, bringing Wabash County's total to 27. For the past several weeks, Wabash County's spread of COVID-19 has been rated at red, the highest level, by the ISDH. That rating will be re-evaluated using data through the previous Sunday

at noon Wednesday. On Monday, ISDH media relations coordinator Megan Wade-Taxter said they were "not aware of any identified events or common exposures in Wabash County." "We contact every county that's in red or orange to discuss what's happening in the community to determine if there are specific locations or events that have contributed to the increase in cases," said Wade-Taxter. On Tuesday, Mayor Scott

Long said with the local positivity ratings for all tests falling below the 15 percent threshold for the past several days, that rating might soon be lowered to orange, the second-highest status, "but we cannot let our guard down if that happens." "I don't know of any specific events that created the surge, but I think the steps that we have taken locally limiting attendance at sporting events, etc. are reducing our positivity rate," said Long. Three weeks ago, Wabash

See TESTING, page A3



Photo by Rob Burgess / Plain Dealer

The testing at Wabash Friends Church was originally only going to be offered for two weeks, but that has been expanded for another week.

Libraries on lockdown



Photo by Rob Burgess / Plain Dealer

With the state having declared Wabash County's COVID-19 spread as being red, the highest level, local libraries have been converted to curbside-only service.

Local branches adjust to the reality of socially-distanced patrons

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

With the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) having declared Wabash County's local COVID-19 spread as being red, the highest level, some changes were inevitable.

One of the places where these changes have become most noticeable is the locations which are meant to serve the public no matter what: public libraries. And while the main branches themselves have been closed, they've still found ways to connect with the patrons who value them the most.

Wabash Carnegie Public Library

On Tuesday, Wabash Carn-



The North Manchester Public Library has been assembling holiday-themed baskets of materials for patrons to pick up.

egie Public Library (WCPL) executive director Ware Wimberly said it "has been very difficult" for them to change from the traditional way of serving their patrons. "We have always enjoyed in-person contact, but it

was the right thing to do for their safety, as well as that of our staff," said Wimberly. "In spite of the fact that we cannot wander the stacks together for a while, we do continue to work hard to keep the library an engaging

hub for the Wabash community." Wimberly said while the feedback regarding the shift to curbside services had "generally been positive,"

See LIBRARIES, page A4

County in compliance with state, federal bridge requirements

Inspection report reveals of 157 local bridges, 27.4 percent are over 50 years old

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

At Monday's Wabash County Board of Commissioners meeting, United Consulting project manager Chris J. Andrzejewski presented the latest local bridge inspection report.

Andrzejewski said of the 157 total bridges in Wabash County, 19 were load-posted bridges, one was a special feature bridge and 18 were considered critical bridges.

"Wabash County is in full compliance with state and federal requirements," said Andrzejewski.

However, Andrzejewski said the top five Wabash County bridges on the rehabilitation list were:

- Bridge No. 96: Hanging Rock Road over the Salamonie River.
- Bridge No. 109: County Road 500 South over Back Creek.
- Bridge No. 163: Main Street over the Eel River.
- Bridge No. 139: County Road 390 East over Treaty Creek.
- Bridge No. 503: Waterworks Road over Grant Creek.

Andrzejewski said in comparison to the rest of the state, Wabash County's 157 was slightly above the average of 144 in all counties.

The average age of Wabash County's bridges was 45 years old, with the average for all Indiana counties being 44 years old.

The percentage of load-posted bridges for Wabash County, 12.1 percent,

See BRIDGES, page A3

'Japan's spotlight is now brightly shining on your region'

Wabash's unique role in the global economy highlighted during the annual summit

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

During a special video message Tuesday, Wabash City Schools (WCS) superintendent Jason Callahan emphasized the importance of foreign investment to the

local schools and economy. Callahan delivered the remarks during the Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit, the annual event being held virtually this year in partnership with Grow Wabash County, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and the Japanese American Society of Indiana. Callahan said the WCS mission is meant "largely to ensure every kid is college and career ready in a global economy."

Callahan said they do that by ensuring every graduate achieves one of the "three Es": Enrollment in college or higher education, employed at a living wage or enlisted in the military. Callahan said in 2008, the recession in Wabash County "really hit hard." "We lost a lot of low skilled jobs," said Callahan. "We pushed really hard at that time to make college or higher education a priority. We were very successful at

that." Callahan said WCS became an early college school, one of the few in Indiana. In 2019, 20 percent of Wabash High School (WHS) graduates left high school with an Ivy Tech statewide transfer core, "which is basically their first year at a four-year institution." Callahan said there was a problem, though. "What we found though was that a lot of these kids that were going on to high-

ered or their test scores or their diploma said that they could do the college work, when that following fall hit, they weren't showing up," said Callahan. "We call this 'wilt' because these students might have been prepared academically, but for whatever reason, they did not show up on a college campus. Whether that was college tuition issues, etc., just first-generation

See JAPAN, page A4

Argentina and learning the wrong lessons about abortion

Argentina – the home country of Pope Francis – is currently in a fight over abortion.

The pope has even weighed in – talking, among other things, about making it clear that abortion isn’t a religious issue. It’s a fact issue. A matter of science. When a woman is pregnant, there is a child developing inside her. It’s not a leap of faith to say it; we see it on sonograms. She is a mother and will always be, whatever happens to that child. That’s why women mourn when they suffer miscarriages.

This is a real, grueling, heartbreaking loss. To deny that is an injustice and a lie that helps no one. When you take away the politics and the emotion, that’s what the science tells us. And that’s what lived experience tells us too.

Let’s, again, face facts: If a couple is trying to get pregnant, or is at least open to having children, it’s very clear what a pregnancy means, from the moment it’s known. There is a child developing in the woman. An announcement might be made; nursery decorations might be purchased; baby shower plans might take shape. All of this expectation is not unlike the waiting of the current Christian season of Advent. There is a looking forward to the arrival of the Christ Child (even if we sometimes seem to push Him aside for Santa Claus or Festivus).

This all ties to Argentina’s current debate. Gines Gonzalez Garcia, the country’s health minister, is a key proponent of legalizing abortion in that country. Journalist Ines San Martin recently wrote in the Catholic magazine Crux that Garcia has called abortion a “public health issue,” and that “there are not two lives, as some say.” Garcia insists: “There’s clearly a single person, and the other (thing) is a phe-

nomenon. If it were not like that, we would be facing the greatest universal genocide, (because) more than half the civilized world allows it.”

Kathryn Lopez



A “phenomenon”! That’s a new euphemism. Garcia seems to be running out of ways to veil the truth. That “genocide” word is much more accurate than “choice”

or “reproductive health.” Abortion is, indeed, a horrific part of the “civilized world.” In the United States alone, there have been tens of millions of abortions since 1973. That’s a brutal reality to come to terms with. As we approach a half-century of legal abortion here, we ought to reflect on how much other violence might stem from this, our most poisonous export.

Those words from the Argentinian health minister, as backward as he got them, point to the truth. And I’m starting to hope beyond all

hope, and pray for a miracle, that Joe Biden might be serious about healing. If he is, he will drive us away from the radical allegiance to Planned Parenthood and its sexual revolutionary values.

It has been said that women deserve better than abortion, and they do. So does civilization. Again, Garcia went right there, but took the wrong message away from it. We need to step away from abortion and truly welcome life – to walk with women and their children. To treasure and support them.

Pope Francis frequently talks about tenderness. Who better than mothers and babies to show us what that looks like? And when we see it, we will be touched by it – rather than terrorized by more violence and death.

Kathryn Jean Lopez is senior fellow at the National Review Institute, editor-at-large of National Review magazine and author of the new book “A Year With the Mystics: Visionary Wisdom for Daily Living.” She is also chair of Cardinal Dolan’s pro-life commission in New York. She can be contacted at klopez@nationalreview.com.

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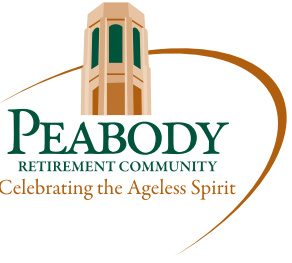
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5-Day Weather Summary

 Wednesday Partly Cloudy 49 / 29	 Thursday Mostly Sunny 51 / 37	 Friday Mostly Cloudy 56 / 45	 Saturday Scattered Rain 52 / 33	 Sunday Mostly Cloudy 38 / 24
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Sun and Moon

Today's sunset 5:19 p.m.
Tomorrow's sunrise 7:53 a.m.

 New 12/14	 First 12/21	 Full 12/29	 Last 1/6
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Detailed Local Outlook

Today we will see partly cloudy skies, high temperature of 49°, humidity of 63%. Southwest wind 9 mph. Expect clear skies tonight, overnight low of 28°. South southwest wind 2 to 7 mph. Thursday, skies will be mostly sunny, high temperature of 51°, humidity of 67%. Southeast wind 2 to 7 mph.

Chuck Yeager, 1st to break sound barrier, dies at 97

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GRASS VALLEY, Calif. — Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Charles “Chuck” Yeager, the World War II fighter pilot ace and quintessential test pilot who showed he had the “right stuff” when in 1947 he became the first person to fly faster than sound, has died. He was 97.

Yeager died Monday, his wife, Victoria Yeager, said on his Twitter account.

“It is w/ profound sorrow, I must tell you that my life love General Chuck Yeager passed just before 9pm ET. An incredible life well lived, America’s greatest Pilot, & a legacy of strength, adventure, & patriotism will be remembered forever.”

Yeager’s death is “a tremendous loss to our nation,” NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine said in a statement.

“Gen. Yeager’s pioneering and innovative spirit advanced America’s abilities in the sky and set our nation’s dreams soaring into the jet age and the space age. He said, ‘You don’t concentrate on risks. You concentrate on results. No risk is too great to prevent the necessary job from getting done,’” Bridenstine said.

“In an age of media-made heroes, he is the real deal,” Edwards Air Force Base historian Jim Young said in August 2006 at the unveiling of a bronze statue of Yeager.

He was “the most righteous of all those with the right stuff,” said Maj. Gen. Curtis Bedke, commander of the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards.

Yeager, from a small town in the hills of West Virginia, flew for more than 60 years, including piloting an F-15 to near 1,000 mph at Edwards in October 2002 at age 79.

“Living to a ripe old age is not an end in itself. The trick is to enjoy the years remaining,” he said in “Yeager: An Autobiography.”

“I haven’t yet done everything, but by the time I’m finished, I won’t have missed much,” he wrote. “If I auger in (crash) tomorrow, it won’t be with a frown on my face. I’ve had a ball.”

On Oct. 14, 1947, Yeager, then a 24-year-old captain, pushed an orange, bullet-shaped Bell X-1 rocket plane past 660 mph to break the sound barrier, at the time a daunting aviation milestone.

“Sure, I was apprehensive,” he said in 1968. “When you’re fooling around with something you don’t know much about, there has to be

apprehension. But you don’t let that affect your job.”

The modest Yeager said in 1947 he could have gone even faster if the plane had carried more fuel. He said the ride “was nice, just like riding fast in a car.”

Yeager nicknamed the rocket plane, and all his other aircraft, “Glamorous Glen-nis” for his first wife, who died in 1990.

Yeager’s feat was kept top secret for about a year when the world thought the British had broken the sound barrier first.

“It wasn’t a matter of not having airplanes that would fly at speeds like this. It was a matter of keeping them from falling apart,” Yeager said.

Sixty-five years later to the minute, on Oct. 14, 2012, Yeager commemorated the feat, flying in the back seat of an F-15 Eagle as it broke the sound barrier at more than 30,000 feet above California’s Mojave Desert.

His exploits were told in Tom Wolfe’s book “The Right Stuff,” and in the 1983 film it inspired.

Yeager was born Feb. 23, 1923, in Myra, a tiny community on the Mud River deep in an Appalachian hollow about 40 miles) southwest of Charleston. The family later moved to Hamlin, the county seat. His father was an oil and gas driller and a farmer.

“What really strikes me looking over all those years is how lucky I was, how lucky, for example, to have been born in 1923 and not 1963 so that I came of age just as aviation itself was entering the modern era,” Yeager said in a December 1985 speech at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum.

“I was just a lucky kid who caught the right ride,” he said.

Yeager enlisted in the Army Air Corps after graduating from high school in 1941. He later regretted that his lack of a college education prevented him from becoming an astronaut.

He started off as an aircraft mechanic and, despite becoming severely airsick during his first airplane ride, signed up for a program that allowed enlisted men to become pilots.

Yeager shot down 13 German planes on 64 missions during World War II, including five on a single mission. He was shot down over German-held France but escaped with the help of French partisans.

After World War II, he became a test pilot at Wright-Patterson Air Force

Base in Dayton, Ohio.

Among the flights he made after breaking the sound barrier was one on Dec. 12, 1953, when he flew an X-1A to a record of more than 1,600 mph.

He said he had gotten up at dawn that day and went hunting, bagging a goose before his flight. That night his family ate the goose for dinner, Yeager said.

He returned to combat during the Vietnam War, flying several missions a month in twin-engine B-57 Canberras, making bombing and strafing runs over South Vietnam.

Yeager also commanded Air Force fighter squadrons and wings and the Aerospace Research Pilot School for military astronauts.

“I’ve flown 341 types of military planes in every country in the world and logged about 18,000 hours,” he said in an interview in the January 2009 issue of Men’s Journal. “It might sound funny, but I’ve never owned an airplane in my life. If you’re willing to bleed, Uncle Sam will give you all the planes you want.”

When Yeager left Hamlin, he was already known as a daredevil. On later visits, he often buzzed the town.

“I live just down the street from his mother,” said Gene Brewer, retired publisher of the weekly Lincoln Journal. “One day I climbed up on my roof with my 8 mm camera when he flew overhead. I thought he was going to take me off the roof. You can see the treetops in the bottom of the pictures.”


Yeager flew an F-80 under a Charleston bridge at 450 mph on Oct. 10, 1948, according to newspaper accounts.

When he was asked to repeat the feat for photographers, Yeager replied: “You should never strafe the same place twice ’cause the gunners will be waiting for you.”

Yeager retired from the Air Force in 1975 and moved to a ranch in Cedar Ridge in Northern California where he continued working as a consultant to the Air Force and Northrop Corp. and became well known to younger generations as a television pitchman for automotive parts and heat pumps.

He married Glennis Dickhouse of Oroville, California, on Feb. 26, 1945. She died of ovarian cancer in December 1990. They had four children: Donald, Michael, Sharon and Susan.

Yeager married 45-year-old Victoria Scott D’Angelo in 2003.



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Obituaries

Elizabeth P ‘Beth’ Barker

July 29, 1930 – Dec. 4, 2020

Elizabeth P. “Beth” Barker, 90, of Wabash, Indiana, died at 11:22 am, Friday, December 4, 2020 at Miller’s Merry Manor East in Wabash. She was born on Tuesday, July 29, 1930 in Offutt, Kentucky, to Arthur E. and Lenore (Butcher) Pope.

Beth was a 1947 graduate of Meade Memorial High School in Williamsport, Kentucky. Following high school, she attended college at Pikeville College and graduated from Morehead University. Beth married Earl Cantrell on May 9, 1951, in Pikeville, Kentucky, he preceded her in death on August 4, 1983. Later, she married Randall Barker on August 18, 1985, in Paintsville, Kentucky, he preceded her in death on August 22, 2003. Beth worked as a teacher in Thealka, Kentucky, and Whitehouse, Kentucky, and then attended Mayo Vocational School and learned the stenographic way of life. When she came to Wabash, she worked for Franklin Finance Company, Wabash County Hospital, and in the office at General Tire. In 1986, she started working at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service alongside her husband, Randall. Beth was a longtime member of Wabash Free Will Baptist Church, where she was a Christian all of her adult life. She served as clerk treasurer and also taught Sunday school several years. Although, she was never blessed to be a mother, she “mothered” many throughout her years.



She is survived by three step-children, Robert Barker of Roanoke, Indiana, Deb (Greg) Christopher of Upland, Indiana, and Keith Barker of North Manchester, Indiana, brother, Charles A. Pope of Washington, sister, Vivian Bland of South Carolina, eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, niece and caregiver, Cathy (Philip) King of Wabash, and several other nieces and nephews. She was also preceded in death by her parents, brother, Arthur Pope, Jr., sister, Isabelle Schaad, and grandson, Coleman Barker.

Funeral services will be 10:30 am, Thursday, December 10, 2020, at Wabash Free Will Baptist Church, 1056 Erie Street, Wabash, with Pastor Tim Prater and Pastor Bill Crank officiating. Burial will be in Friends Cemetery, Wabash. Friends may call 4-7 pm Wednesday, at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, 1241 Manchester Ave. Wabash.

The memorial guest book for Beth may be signed at www.grandstaff-hentgen.com.

John Michael Hyden

John Michael Hyden, 41, Colorado, formerly of North Manchester, Indiana, passed away November 29, 2020.

The memory of John Michael Hyden will be cherished by his mother, Linda Hyden, North Manchester; father, Jack Hyden, Michigan; sons, Caleb Copley, Connor Copley, Christian Copley; daughter Caydence Bond; brother, James (Traci) Hyden, Macy, Indiana;

and sister, Linda (Dave) McKee, Silver Lake, Indiana.

Calling Wednesday, December 9, 2020 from 1-2 p.m. at McKee Mortuary, 1401 State Road 114 West, North Manchester, Indiana. Funeral services will begin at the conclusion of calling.

The family has entrusted McKee Mortuary with final arrangements.

Timothy Wayne Haupert

Nov. 10, 1956 – Dec. 5, 2020

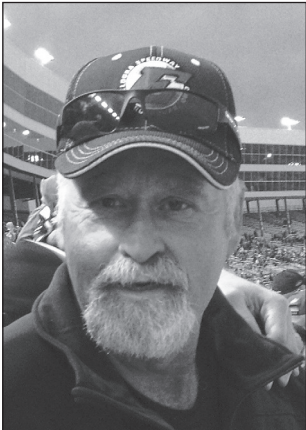
Timothy Wayne Haupert, 64, Macy, Indiana, passed away on Saturday evening, Dec. 5, 2020, at Wellbrooke of Wabash.

Born Nov. 10, 1956, in Wabash, Indiana, he was the son of Lorin Frederick and Mary Louise (Harmon) Haupert. On April 23, 2010, at the Niconza Church, he was married to Kelly Erin Richardson Correll, and she survives.

Tim was a graduate of Northfield High School and was a truck driver and millwright by trade. He was a huge sprint car racing fan and enjoyed going to races and following his favorite drivers.

Survivors include his wife Kelly Haupert, Macy; one son, Chad Douglas (Megan) Haupert, Ft. Worth, Texas; two grandchildren, Grayson Haupert and Stinson Haupert, Ft. Worth; step-daughter, Sarah (Rian) Browne, Jamestown; one brother, Larry Haupert, Ft. Wayne; two sisters, Roberta Haupert, Mt. Dora, Florida; and Mary Lou (Clay) Watson, Wabash; sister-in-law, Mary Haupert, Ft. Wayne; father and mother-in-law, John and Cindy Richardson, Peru; one brother-in-law, Blain (Jennifer) Richardson, Chili; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two sisters, Marlene Haupert, and Peggy Ann Harrell, and two brothers, Douglas Haupert and



Roger Haupert.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, December 14, 2020, at McClain Funeral Home, with Pastor Jason See. Burial will be in Roann Community Cemetery, Roann, Indiana. The service will be livestreamed on Tim’s obituary page at www.mcclainfh.com.

Visitation will be from from 1-5 p.m. on Sunday, December 13, 2020, at the funeral home.

In accordance with COVID19 guidelines, face-masks will be required inside the funeral home.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Timothy Haupert Memorial Fund through the funeral home.

McClain Funeral Home, Denver, Indiana, has been entrusted with arrangements. The online guestbook can be signed at www.mcclainfh.com.

Philip L. Gardner

June 9, 1939 – Dec. 3, 2020

Philip L. Gardner, 81, of LaFontaine, passed away on December 3, 2020 at St. Vincent Hospital in Anderson, Indiana.

Philip is survived by his wife, Arlene; two daughters, Debra Coleman of Indianapolis and Leslie (Enver) Dokovic of Irvine, California; stepmother, Doris Gardner of Elkhart; two step-brothers, Rick (Tammy) Gardner, and Greg Gardner, both of Marion; step-sister,

Lisa Gardner of Elkhart; five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Per Philip’s request, there will be no services.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to McDonald Funeral Homes, LaFontaine Chapel, 104 South Main Street, LaFontaine, Indiana 46940.

Online condolences may be directed to the family at www.mcdonaldfunerals.com.

Richard ‘Dick’ Bland

Services for Richard “Dick” Bland, 80, of rural Wabash, will be 11 a.m., Friday, at Grand-

staff-Hentgen Funeral Service. Friends may call 4-8 p.m., Thursday, at the funeral home.

TESTING

From page A1

Friends Church, 3563 S. Indiana 13, opened a portion of their facility for a free ISDH COVID-19 testing site, on the north side of the building. Signs are in place directing those wishing to be tested which way to enter.

The testing was originally only going to be offered for two weeks, but that has been expanded for another week.

“We choose the locations for our testing operations based on need and input from communities,” said Wade-Taxter, on Monday.

The testing will still be offered from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Friday, Dec. 11.

Otherwise, the ISDH only lists one testing site available in Wabash County, which is the Parkview FirstCare Walk-In Clinic, 1655 Cass St., Wabash. An appointment is required and it is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Patients must be symptomatic to be tested. Insurance co-pay, credit card and cash are accepted for payment. For more information, call 877-774-8632.

School figures

The ISDH’s latest school dashboard results are as of 11:59 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4 and were updated Monday, Dec. 7. The dashboard is updated weekly at midnight Mondays.

Statewide, 198 schools reported no cases, 1,829 reported one or more case and 347 have not reported.

In Wabash County, only Saint Bernard Elementary School and White’s Jr./Sr. High School have reported to the ISDH that they have no cases.

During the latest update, Wabash County schools with one or more confirmed cases

included:

■ Manchester Jr./Sr. High School (MHS) reported six new student positive cases, fewer than five new teacher positive cases, 29 total student positive cases, six total teacher positive cases and eight total staff positive cases.

■ Manchester Elementary School (MES) reported fewer than five each total student positive cases, total teacher positive cases and total staff positive cases.

■ Manchester Intermediate School (MIS) reported fewer than five each new student positive cases and total student positive cases.

■ Metro North Elementary School reported fewer than five each new staff positive cases, total student positive cases, total teacher positive cases and total staff positive cases.

■ Sharp Creek Elementary School reported fewer than five each new student positive cases, new staff positive cases, total student positive cases, total teacher positive cases and total staff positive cases.

■ Northfield Jr./Sr. High School (NHS) reported 11 new student positive cases, fewer than five new teacher positive cases, new staff positive cases, 36 total student positive cases, fewer than five total teacher positive cases and eight total staff positive cases.

■ O.J. Neighbours Elementary School reported fewer than five new teacher positive cases, fewer than five new staff positive cases, fewer than five total student positive cases, seven total teacher positive cases and fewer than five total staff positive cases.

■ Wabash Middle School reported fewer than five new student positive cases and nine total student positive cases.

■ Wabash High School (WHS) reported fewer than

five new student positive cases, fewer than five new staff positive cases, eight total student positive cases, fewer than five total teacher positive cases and fewer than five total staff positive cases.

■ Southwood Jr./Sr. High School (SHS) reported fewer than five total new student positive cases, eight total student positive cases and fewer than five total staff positive cases.

■ Southwood Elementary School reported fewer than five each new staff positive cases, total student positive cases, total teacher positive cases and total staff positive cases.

On the Manchester Community Schools’ (MCS) own dashboard the information is updated once contact tracing is complete and all close contacts have been notified. MCS defines close contact is when an individual is within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes of someone with confirmed COVID-19.

“The Wabash County Health Department determined close contacts in conjunction with school personnel and advised us who to quarantine,” stated MCS.

The individually reported MCS cases include:

■ Sept. 28: One case each at MES and MHS, with five people quarantined.

■ Oct. 10: One case at MHS, with one person quarantined.

■ Oct. 14: One case at MHS, with two people quarantined.

■ Oct. 15: One case at MES, with five people quarantined. And one case at MHS, with two people quarantined.

■ Oct. 16: One case at MHS, with 34 people quarantined.

■ Oct. 20: One case at MHS, with no additional people quarantined.

■ Oct. 21: One case at MIS, with one person quarantined.

■ Oct. 28: One case at MHS, with no additional people quarantined.

■ Nov. 2: One case at MHS, with two people quarantined.

■ Nov. 3: Two cases at MHS, with two people quarantined.

■ Nov. 4: One case at MHS, with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 4: One case at MIS with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 5: One case at MHS, with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 6: One case at MES, and one case at MHS, with two people quarantined.

■ Nov. 8: One case at MCS Transportation, with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 9: One case at MHS, with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 10: Three cases at MHS, with three people quarantined; and one case at MES, with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 13: One case at MHS, with three people quarantined.

■ Nov. 14: One case at MHS, with three people quarantined.

■ Nov. 16: Two cases at MHS, with seven people quarantined; one case at MCS Transportation including all schools in the district, with 25 people quarantined; and one case at MHS, with five people quarantined.

■ Nov. 17: One case at MES, with 22 people quarantined; and one case at MCS Transportation, with four people quarantined.

■ Nov. 19: One case at MHS, with six people quarantined; and one case at MCS Transportation, with one person quarantined.

■ Nov. 20: Two cases at MHS, with 15 people quarantined.

■ Nov. 22: One case at MES, with 11 people quarantined.

■ Nov. 23: One case at

VFW Post No. 286 to host tenderloin dinner Friday

Staff REPORT

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post. No. 286 will host a tenderloin dinner from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11 at 3678 W. Old 24, according to Dan Ford.

The menu will include hand-breaded tenderloin, potato salad and coleslaw.

The cost will be \$9 per person. It will be open to the public and carryout will be available.

For more information, call 260-563-2463.

BRIDGES

From page A1

was slightly above the average for all counties being 11.5 percent.

The percentage of bridges that are over 50 years old in Wabash County, 27.4 percent, was slightly below that of the average of all counties, 31.3 percent.

The sufficiency rating of bridges which are below 50 years old in Wabash County, 5.1 percent, was also slightly below that of the average of

all counties, 7.3 percent.

On Tuesday, Wabash County Highway Department supervisor Cole Wyatt said most county bridges are inspected every two years.

“There are some bridges that require annual inspections due to their condition,” said Wyatt. “There are also a handful of bridges that are only inspected once every four years due to their age and condition.”

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

PULSE

From page A1

Winners will be announced Mondays, Dec. 14 and Dec. 21. Giveaway amounts range from \$20 to \$100. Downtown Bucks are available for purchase online and in-person at Visit Wabash County, 221 S. Miami St. For more information, visit www.wabashmarketplace.org or call 260-563-0975.

Second Harvest to hold tailgate food distribution every other Wednesday

Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana has planned tailgate food distributions for 1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9 at Manchester Church of the Brethren, 1306 Beckley St., North Manchester; and 11 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 23 at Bachelor Creek Church of Christ, 2147 Indiana 15.

For more information, visit www.curehunger.org/classy.org/campaign/hunger

-action-month/c299182 or <https://www.givepulse.com/group/203410>.

Charley Creek Gardens Yule Time Stroll planned

The Charley Creek Gardens will be open for its 11th Annual Yule Time Stroll with casually lighted pathways for guests to enjoy. Every evening from 6 to 9 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13 through Wednesday, Dec. 23, the Gardens will be open for guests to walk through with families, friends and thermoses of hot cocoa. Charley Creek Gardens is located at 551 N. Miami St. and parking for the Gardens is located at 518 N. Wabash St. Yule Time Stroll is free and open to the public. For more information, visit CharleyCreekGardens.org/events.

Editor's note: If you have an upcoming event to submit, please send it by email to news@wabashplainedealer.com no later than five days before the event itself. Please use complete sentences, Associated Press style and Microsoft Word or PDF file formats.

COVID-19 positive cases, bringing Wabash County’s total to 2,122, with 10,815 tests. The local seven-day positivity rating for all tests was 12.6 percent. The local seven-day positivity rating for unique individuals was 24.1 percent.

Statewide figures

On Tuesday, the ISDH announced that 5,457 additional Hoosiers have been diagnosed with COVID-19 through testing at state and private laboratories. That brings to 392,663 the number of Indiana residents now known to have had the novel coronavirus following corrections to the previous day’s dashboard.

A total of 6,109 Hoosiers are confirmed to have died from COVID-19, an increase of 124 from the previous day. Another 301 probable deaths have been reported based on clinical diagnoses in patients for whom no positive test is on record. Deaths are reported based on when data are received by the state and occurred over multiple days.

To date, 2,338,308 unique individuals have been tested in Indiana, up from 2,323,969 on Monday. A total of 4,656,827 tests, including repeat tests for unique individuals, have been reported to the ISDH since Feb. 26.

Besides the Wabash site, the ISDH will offer free testing from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. through Friday at the following locations:

■ Jackson County Testing, 207 N. Pine St. Seymour.

■ Morgan County Testing, 1749 Hospital Dr. Martinsville.

To find other testing sites around the state, visit www.coronavirus.in.gov and click on the COVID-19 testing information link.

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplainedealer.com.

Trump hails vaccine ‘miracle,’ with millions of doses soon

By **ZEKE MILLER**
and **JONATHAN LEMIRE**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump celebrated the expected approval of the first U.S. vaccine for the coronavirus Tuesday as the White House worked to instill confidence in the massive distribution effort that will largely be executed by President-elect Joe Biden.

Trump said the expected approvals are coming before most people thought possible. “They say it’s somewhat of a miracle and I think that’s true,” he declared.

Trump led Tuesday’s White House event celebrating “Operation Warp Speed,” his administration’s effort to produce and distribute safe and effective vaccines for COVID-19. The first vaccine, from drugmaker Pfizer, is expected to receive endorsement by a panel of Food and Drug Administration advisers as soon as this week, with delivery of 100 million doses — enough for 50 million Americans — expected in coming months.

“Every American who

wants the vaccine will be able to get the vaccine and we think by spring we’re going to be in a position nobody would have believed possible just a few months ago,” Trump said.

Trump and his aides hope to tamp down skepticism among some Americans about the vaccine and help build the outgoing Republican president’s legacy.

However, Trump’s administration was also facing new scrutiny Tuesday after failing to lock in a chance to buy millions of additional doses of Pfizer’s vaccine, which has been shown to be highly effective against COVID-19. That decision could delay the delivery of a second batch of doses until Pfizer fulfills other international contracts.

Trump used Tuesday’s event to sign an executive order in which the secretary of Health and Human Services is directed to ensure that Americans have priority access to the vaccine.

A senior administration official said the order would restrict the federal government from delivering doses to other nations until there is excess

supply to meet domestic demand, but it was not immediately clear what the practical impact would be.

Tuesday’s “Operation Warp Speed” event featured Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and a host of government experts, state leaders and business executives, as the White House looked to explain that the vaccine is safe and lay out the administration’s plans to bring it to the American people. But officials from Biden’s transition team, which will oversee the bulk of the largest vaccination program in the nation’s history once he takes office Jan. 20, were not invited.

Biden, who was rolling out his senior health team on Tuesday, said last week that in meetings with Trump administration officials his aides have discovered that “there’s no detailed plan that we’ve seen” for how to get the vaccines out of containers, into syringes and then into people’s arms.

Trump administration officials insist that such plans have been developed, with the bulk of the work falling to states and local governments

to ensure their most vulnerable populations are vaccinated first. In all, about 50,000 vaccination sites are enrolled in the government’s distribution system.

But career officials insisted it was still too early to declare victory.

““We don’t want to get out in front of ourselves,” said Army Gen. Gustave Perna, responsible for overseeing the logistical and distribution efforts. “As my father used to say, ‘You can only spike the football when you’re in the end zone.’ Well, what is the end zone described to us here? Shots in arms.”

Speaking in Wilmington, Delaware, Biden promised to distribute “100 million shots in the first 100 days” of his administration — roughly on pace with Trump’s projections for vaccination.

Introducing his pandemic response team on Tuesday, Biden laid out his priorities for the start of his new government. He repeated his previous calls for all Americans to wear masks for 100 days to prevent the spread of the virus and said he’d mandate doing so in federal buildings and on

public transportation. Biden also said he believed the virus could be brought under enough control to reopen “the majority of schools” within his first 100 days as president.

Those pledges came even as Biden struck a somber tone about the toll the coronavirus has already taken. He said that, after about nine months of living with the pandemic, the U.S. is “at risk of becoming numb to its toll on all of us” and “resigned to feel that there’s nothing we can do.”

Though Trump was taking credit for the pace of vaccine development, much of the groundwork was laid over the past decade, amid new research into messenger RNA, or mRNA, vaccines — of the sort developed by both Pfizer and Moderna.

“The speed is a reflection of years of work that went before,” Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease expert, told The Associated Press this month. “That’s what the public has to understand.”

Fauci, who will serve as a chief scientific adviser to Biden’s administration, appeared virtually at the presi-

dent-elect’s event, but did not attend the White House summit. The White House did include early clips of Fauci predicting a longer development time for the vaccines in a round-up of skeptics of Trump’s timetable.

The Trump administration insists that between the Pfizer vaccine, the vaccine from Moderna and others in the pipeline, the U.S. will be able to accommodate any American who wants to be vaccinated by the end of the second quarter of 2021.

The Food and Drug Administration’s panel of outside vaccine experts is to meet Thursday to conduct a final review of the Pfizer drug, and it will meet later this month on the Moderna vaccine.

FDA decisions on the two drugs are expected within days of each meeting. Both have been determined to be 95 percent effective against the virus that causes COVID-19. Plans call for distributing and then administering about 40 million doses of the two companies’ vaccines by the end of the year — with the first doses shipping within hours of FDA clearance.

LIBRARIES

From page A1

they had also learned that “patrons do miss walking through our doors.”

“This has helped us become more creative in seeking additional and valuable ways to reach out remotely during this unusual pandemic crisis,” said Wimberly.

Wimberly said they have seen an increased interest in the WCPL’s social media platforms.

“Christmas books and Christmas movies have been more popular than ever,” said Wimberly.

Wimberly said their staff have been making take-home arts activities patrons.

Also, the online Hoopla offerings “are reaching many who did not use this service previously.”

“We have received suggestions from patrons of all ages and hope this continues,” said Wimberly.

Wimberly said the WCPL “is continuously evaluating when we can return to in-person services.”

“We want to emphasize that we are following state and county guidance,” said Wimberly.

Wimberly said they have been holding regular check-ins with the Wabash County Health Department.

“Re-opening will depend upon county metrics, most especially color-coding statistics,” said Wimberly. “We appreciate that our trustees continue to emphasize their concern and support for the approach we are taking during these unusual times.”

North Manchester Public Library

On Wednesday, Dec. 2, Stacey Hesting ran to the bench in front of the North Manchester Public Library (NMPL) to pick up her curbside order.

Hesting said going into the library and picking out her

own books was one of the things she missed most when the building shut down.

“I have been doing more reading during pandemic,” said Hesting. “It’s beautiful and they’ll even pick out holiday books for you. It’s such a great library.”

NMPL adult department manager and marketing coordinator Jeanna Hann said the curbside service has gone “really, really well.”

On Thursday, Dec. 3, Hann said in the two and a half weeks that they’ve been curbside only, they’ve circulated 1,499 items to their patrons.

“It was a lot smoother from the first time we did it,” said Hann. “The first time everyone, us included, were trying to get used to it. We’ve transitioned really quickly. Our patrons are right on board. We’re slammed and busy.”

Hann, like Wimberly, said they aren’t sure of when they’ll be able to open for in-person services, but that they were also staying in touch with the Wabash County Health Department.

Hann said they knew they would be shut down for at least the first two weeks of December.

“We’re trying to do it on a two-week basis,” said Hann. “Right now it’s indefinitely, but it’s until further notice. You never know, but it’s probably going to be through the end of the year.”

Hann said the changes were hardest on their programming staff.

“They really feed off the kids who come in here,” said Hann. “Storytime hasn’t had the same flare.”

Hann said they are still able to connect using Facebook Live and other means.

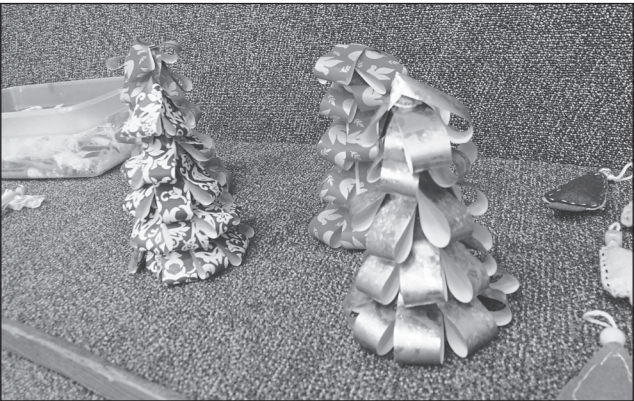
One event which is set to increase engagement is the Santa’s Workshop scheduled for this weekend.

“The NMPL staff has been working like busy elves to make an amazing selection of ornaments, decorations, and goodies that you can



Photos by Rob Burgess / Plain Dealer

One event which is set to increase engagement is the Santa’s Workshop scheduled for this weekend at the North Manchester Public Library.



Items include gnome ornaments, doggie treat bags, Scandinavian Advent stars, garlands, forest animal puzzles, paintings, candy cane mice and these ribbon trees.

give to family and friends for the holidays,” said Hann, on Friday, Dec. 4.

Hann said these gifts will be available for purchasing for anyone who wants to participate including children, teens and adults. Items include gnome ornaments, doggie treat bags, Scandinavian Advent stars, garlands, forest animal puzzles, paint-

ings and candy cane mice.

Hann said patrons may request an order form through e-mail at nmpl@nman.lib.in.us or by calling 260-982-4773. Patrons will then tune in to the Santa’s Workshop live broadcast on the library Facebook page at 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 12 to see the gifts available for purchase. Patrons may then fill out their



These gifts will be available for purchasing for anyone who wants to participate including children, teens and adults.

order form with the items they want and then drop their order forms or cash off at the NMPL by Wednesday, Dec. 16 via curbside service.

Hann said the first five “Bucks” of shopping is free for anyone 18 years and under. Additional bucks can be purchased for more shopping, with the cost being \$1 for every three “NMPL

Bucks.”

All Santa’s Workshop orders will be filled in the order they are received and for as long as supplies last. Orders will be available for curbside pick up beginning Thursday, Dec. 17.

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

JAPAN

From page A1

students. Maybe they just weren’t motivated to go on to college. So, we took a step back and we started looking at what college is. And I don’t think Wabash High School is alone.”

Callahan said 63 percent of Hoosier children are enrolling in two- and four-year colleges, 38 percent of college-going students complete in four years and 59.2 percent of high school students who enroll in college complete within six years.

“That’s not a very good metric,” said Callahan. “So we started looking at redefining college.”

Callahan said it was at this point WCS started looking for partnerships in the community.

“We looked for industries where we could introduce our kids to see what Wabash County has to offer,” said Callahan.

Callahan said through

Grow Wabash County they were connected with Oji Intertech, a Japanese company with a location in North Manchester. Oji Intertech is one of several foreign companies with a presence in Wabash County: Wabash’s Home Design is based in Malaysia, Urbana’s Kalen-born Abresist Corporation is based in Germany and Wabash Castings is based in Canada.

“We just found there was a really good synergy,” said Callahan, of their relationship with Oji Intertech.

Callahan said what they needed was a qualified, skilled workforce.

“What we’re looking for is kids ... to be motivated. And in order to be motivated they have to develop what’s called a career identity,” said Callahan. “A lot of kids don’t know what’s in their own back yard.”

Callahan said they talked about re-framing the image of manufacturing.

“We feel like a lot of times, our families have stigma

that manufacturing is dirty, maybe unsafe work. They don’t really know what it is. They think about foundries. They don’t realize it’s pretty sophisticated,” said Callahan.

Callahan said their Career Partnership Scholars program was designed to “empower students to realize an affordable pathway to achieve their passions and to develop and sustain a quality workforce through local talent development and retention.”

Callahan said Oji Intertech, in turn, “could have a viable pipeline of talent for years to come.”

Consul-General of Japan in Chicago Kenichi Okada said he visited Wabash in September, when WHS started first-ever foreign language program, studying Japanese.

“That’s great steps that can be modeled for other schools across Indiana and the United States,” said Okada.

Okada said the region was

“doing everything right.” Okada said three previous investment missions “have more than put your name on the map in Japan.”

“Japan’s spotlight is now brightly shining on your region,” said Okada.

Okada said COVID-19 constituted a “major hit to the Japanese economy,” which fell 28 percent in the second quarter of the year.

However, despite expected major supply chain interruption, “it didn’t happen” thanks to a “very flexible global strategy.” Okada said local manufactures were able to source parts from across United States, Mexico, Japan and China.

“They are doing their best to limit the impact on the economy,” said Okada. “Some plants shut down but they did it for just one very, very important reason the good health of the American workforce.”

Okada said 70 percent of Japanese companies across the nation did not impose layoffs and of those who

did, 70 percent have already recalled or plan to recall employees.

“We are still going forward. The COVID-19 is not holding us back,” said Okada. “Our business partnership between Japan and Indiana continues to deepen with great momentum going forward.”

Okada said they have about 340 Japanese business facilities in Indiana that provided about 70,000 direct jobs. Okada said that figure jumped by 28 percent over the past five years.

“Indiana shines because it home to nearly half of the jobs created by 1,600 Japanese companies in the 10-state region,” said Okada.

During the keynote presentation, BowerGroupAsia’s managing director for Japan Kiyoaki Aburaki said Indiana’s location was key to the success of the partnership, but that the “people of Indiana are wonderful.”

Aburaki said he traced the state’s special relation-

ship to their country back decades. In June 1984, Indiana Gov. Robert D. Orr announced a bipartisan legislative agreement to abolish Indiana’s unitary taxation, which 12 states use to calculate a local company’s tax as a percentage of its total, worldwide profits, not on simply the profits of the subsidiary situated in that states, according to

David E. Sanger of The New York Times.

However, Aburaki said the U.S.-Japan Trade Agreement, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) “still have some problems.”

“We live in a complicated world,” said Aburaki. “We need a new U.S.-Japan Collaboration to meet the reality of a data-driven global economy.”

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

U.S. virus deaths hit record levels with the holidays ahead

By **LISA MARIE PANE**
and **RACHEL LA CORTE**
Associated Press

Deaths from COVID-19 in the U.S. have soared to more than 2,200 a day on average, matching the frightening peak reached last April, and cases per day have eclipsed 200,000 on average for the first time on record, with the crisis all but certain to get worse because of the fallout from Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s.

Virtually every state is reporting surges just as a vaccine appears days away from getting the go-ahead in the U.S.

“What we do now literally will be a matter of life and death for many of our citizens,” Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said Tuesday as he extended restrictions on businesses and social gatherings, including a ban on indoor dining and drinking at restaurants and bars.

While the impending arrival of the vaccine is reason for hope, he said, “at the moment, we have to face reality, and the reality is that we are suffering a very dire situation with the pandemic.”

Elsewhere around the country, North Carolina’s governor imposed a 10 p.m. curfew, and authorities in Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley sent a mass cellphone text alert Tuesday telling millions

about the rapid spread of the virus and urging them to abide by the state’s stay-at-home orders.

The virus is blamed for more than 285,000 deaths and 15 million confirmed infections in the United States.

Many Americans disregarded warnings not to travel over Thanksgiving and have ignored other safety precautions, whether out of stubbornness, ignorance or complacency. On Saturday night, police in Southern California arrested nearly 160 people, many of them not wearing masks, at a house party in Palmdale that was held without the homeowner’s knowledge.

Before his death Friday from complications of COVID-19, 78-year-old former Alabama state Sen. Larry Dixon asked his wife from his hospital bed to relay a warning. “Sweetheart, we messed up. We just dropped our guard. ... We’ve got to tell people this is real,” his friend Dr. David Thrasher, a pulmonologist, quoted him as saying.

Although Dixon had been conscientious about masks and social distancing, he met up with friends at a restaurant for what they called a “prayer meeting,” and three of them fell ill, Thrasher said.

Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus task force coordinator, offered what sounded like a

subtle rebuke of the way President Donald Trump and others in the administration have downplayed the disease and undercut scientists.

“Messages need to be critically consistent,” Birx said Tuesday at a Wall Street Journal conference of CEOs. “I think we need to be much more consistent about addressing the myths that are out there – that COVID doesn’t really exist, or that the fatalities somehow are made up, or the hospitalizations are for other diseases, not COVID, that masks actually hurt you.”

On Thursday, a Food and Drug Administration advisory panel is widely expected to authorize emergency use of Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine, and shots could begin almost immediately after that. Britain on Tuesday started dispensing the Pfizer vaccine, becoming the first country in the West to begin mass vaccinations.

Still, any vaccination campaign will take many months, and U.S. health experts are warning of a continuing surge of infections in the coming weeks as people gather for the holidays.

California officials painted a dire picture as more than 22,000 residents test positive for the coronavirus each day, with about 12 percent inevitably showing up at hospitals in two to three weeks. They fear the spike

could soon overwhelm intensive care units. Southern California’s Riverside University Health System Medical Center went so far as to open an ICU in a storage room.

For the sixth day in a row and 11 of the last 12 days, North Carolina hit new highs in the number of people in the hospital with COVID-19. The patient count has doubled over the past month to nearly 2,400.

In Georgia, the number of confirmed or suspected coronavirus infections has soared more than 70 percent in the past week, and hospitals are sounding alarms about their ability to absorb new COVID-19 patients.

The state is averaging more than 5,000 confirmed or suspected cases per day. Even then, Georgia ranks only 44th among the states for the most new cases per capita in the past 14 days because infections are spreading so rapidly everywhere else.

More than 2,500 COVID-19 patients were hospitalized Monday statewide. That’s below the summer peak of 3,200 but more than double the most recent low point in mid-October.

“We are effectively reversing the gains we made after the summer surge,” said Amber Schmidtke, an epidemiologist who does a daily analysis of Georgia’s COVID-19 numbers.

Trump thought courts were key to winning. Judges disagreed

By **COLLEEN LONG**
and **ED WHITE**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and his allies say their lawsuits aimed at subverting the 2020 election and reversing his loss to Joe Biden would be substantiated, if only judges were allowed to hear the cases.

There is a central flaw in the argument. Judges have heard the cases and have been among the harshest critics of the legal arguments put forth by Trump’s legal team, often dismissing them with scathing language of repudiation.

This has been true whether the judge has been appointed by a Democrat or a Republican, including those named by Trump himself.

The judicial rulings that have rejected Trump’s unfounded claims of widespread voter fraud have underscored not only the futility of the lame-duck president’s brazen attempt to sabotage the people’s will but also the role of the courts in checking his unprecedented efforts to stay in power.

The rebukes have not stopped the litigation. On Tuesday, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton sued the states of Georgia, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, alleging that they violated the Constitution based on a litany of already-dismissed complaints. Paxton asked the U.S. Supreme Court to invalidate their 62 Electoral College votes for Biden – a move that would swing the election to Trump and would be unprecedented in American history.

On Monday, U.S. District Judge Linda Parker threw out a lawsuit challenging Michigan’s election results that had been filed two days after the state certified the results for Biden. Parker, appointed by President Barack Obama, said the case embodied the phrase “This ship has sailed.”

“This lawsuit seems to be less about achieving the relief plaintiffs seek ... and more about the impact of their allegations on people’s faith in the democratic process and their trust in our government.”

The lawsuit filed on behalf of a group of voters claimed Biden benefited from fraud, alleging, as in much of the other litigation, a massive Democrat-run conspiracy to shift the results. It sought to reverse the certification and impound all voting machines for inspection – “relief that is stunning in its scope and breathtaking in its reach,” the judge said.

“Plaintiffs ask this court to ignore the orderly statutory scheme established to challenge elections and to ignore the will of millions of voters. This, the court cannot, and will not, do,” she said.

“The people have spoken.” Her ruling stands alongside others in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Arizona and Nevada that have a common thread: They all rejected Trump’s claims.

Even in the face of these losses in court, Trump has contended that, in fact, he won the election. And he’s moved out of the courts to directly appeal to lawmakers as his losses mount. He brought Michigan lawmakers to the White House in a failed bid to set aside the vote tally, and phoned Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, asking him to order a special legislative session to overturn the states results. Kemp refused. Trump also called Pennsylvania Republican House Speaker Bryan Cutler, who said state law did not give the legislature the power to overturn the will of voters.

And Trump tweeted in all caps, “I WON THE ELECTION, BIG.”

While that is not the case, what is true is that Trump is rapidly running out of legal runway. Out of roughly 50 lawsuits filed, more than 35 have been dropped

or dismissed. The U.S. Supreme Court was expected to weigh in later this week in a case from Pennsylvania. A great deal of the lawsuits highlight a lack of understanding of how elections actually work.

In Georgia, U.S. District Judge Timothy Batten, appointed by President George W. Bush, dismissed a lawsuit filed by attorney Sidney Powell, who was dropped from the Trump legal team a few weeks ago but has still continued to spread faulty election claims.

The lawsuit claimed widespread fraud meant to illegally manipulate the vote count in favor of Biden. The suit said the scheme was carried out in different ways, including ballot stuffing, votes flipped by the election system from Trump to Biden and problems with absentee ballots. The judge summarily rejected those claims.

Batten said the lawsuit sought “perhaps the most extraordinary relief ever sought in any federal court in connection with an election.”

He said the lawsuit sought to ignore the will of voters in Georgia, which certified the state for Biden again Monday after three vote counts.

“They want this court to substitute its judgment for that of two-and-a-half million Georgia voters who voted for Joe Biden and this I am unwilling to do,” Batten said.

Trump has appointed more than 150 federal court judges who have been confirmed by the Senate and pushed through three Supreme Court justices.

Much like Trump, his lawyers try to blame the political leanings of the judge after their legal arguments are flayed.

When a federal appeals panel in Philadelphia rejected Trump’s election challenge just five days after it reached the court, Trump legal advisor Jenna Ellis called their work a product of “the activist judicial machinery in Pennsylvania.”

But Trump appointed the judge who wrote the Nov. 27 opinion.

“Voters, not lawyers, choose the president. Ballots, not briefs, decide elections,” Judge Stephanos Bibas wrote as the 3rd U.S. Circuit panel refused to stop the state from certifying its results for Democrat Joe Biden, a demand he called “breathtaking.”

All three of the panel members were appointed by Republican presidents.

And they were upholding the decision of a fourth Republican, U.S. District Judge Matthew Brann, a conservative jurist and Federalist Society member. Brann had called the campaign’s legal case, which was argued in court by Rudy Giuliani, a “haphazard” jumble that resembled “Frankenstein’s monster.”

In state courts, too, the lawsuits have failed. In Arizona on Friday, Judge Randall Warner, an independent appointed in 2007 by Democratic former Gov. Janet Napolitano, threw out a bid to undo Biden’s victory.

Arizona Republican Party Chairwoman Kelli Ward challenged of ballots in metro Phoenix that were duplicated because voters’ earlier ballots were damaged or could not be run through tabulators.

Warner wrote: “There is no evidence that the inaccuracies were intentional or part of a fraudulent scheme. They were mistakes. And given both the small number of duplicate ballots and the low error rate, the evidence does not show any impact on the outcome.”

In Nevada on Friday, Judge James Todd Russell in Carson City ruled that attorneys for Republican electors failed to provide clear or convincing evidence of fraud or illegality.

Nevada judges are nonpartisan. But Russell’s father was a Republican governor of the state from 1951-59.

Legal panel recommends to free Minnesota man jailed for life as a teen

By **ROBIN MCDOWELL**
and **MARGIE MASON**
Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A national panel of legal experts recommended the immediate release of a Black man sentenced to life in prison as a teenager nearly two decades ago.

The panel also said Minnesota police appeared to have suffered from “tunnel vision” while investigating the case of Myon Burrell, who was convicted of killing a little girl hit by a stray bullet in 2002. In addition, the panel said, among the other serious flaws in the high-profile case, police ignored witnesses and evidence that might have helped eliminate Burrell as a suspect.

The panel, which was created to examine Burrell’s conviction and sentence, released its report Tuesday. Many of its findings mirrored those uncovered by an Associated Press and APM Reports investigation earlier this year. They included unreliable testimony from the sole eyewitness; a heavy reliance on jailhouse informants who received “extraordinarily generous” sentence reductions in exchange for their testimonies; and a failure to retrieve surveillance video from a corner store – footage that Burrell, now 34, has always maintained would have cleared him.

The eight-member panel was unable to address Burrell’s guilt or innocence, saying its work was hampered by Hennepin County Prosecutor Mike Freeman’s failure to provide all of the evidence the panel requested. It recommended that the case be handed over to the state’s new conviction review unit for further investigation, noting that the missing police and prosecution files, witness interviews, tape recordings and details about deals cut with jailhouse informants “may yield new evidence of actual innocence or due process issues.”

In the meantime, the panel members said they supported Burrell’s release from prison, noting his age at the time of the crime, that he had no prior record and that he behaved well behind bars. They pointed out that the U.S. Supreme Court in recent years has argued against

overly harsh sentences for juveniles, saying their brains and decision-making skills are not fully developed.

“The extensive work of this outstanding legal panel supports the immediate release of Myon Burrell,” said Nekima Levy Armstrong, who heads the Minneapolis-based Racial Justice Network, adding that the case “represents everything that is wrong with the criminal justice system and the ease with which an innocent person can be convicted.”

Burrell was accused of pulling the trigger that killed Tyesha Edwards, a sixth grade Black girl who was shot through the heart while doing homework at her dining room table with her sister. Her death enraged the African American community, which was tired of losing children to guns and gang violence.

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who was then the city’s top prosecutor, has held up Burrell’s conviction throughout her political career as an example of her tough-on-crime policies that helped put away young, dangerous offenders in the name of justice.

After she raised the case again on the Democratic presidential debate stage last year, the AP published the findings of its investigation, which raised several red flags surrounding the case. They included:

■ No hard evidence: No gun, DNA, or fingerprints were found.

■ Video footage showing the lead homicide detective offering a man in police custody \$500 for Burrell’s name, even if it was just hearsay.

■ Burrell’s co-defendants saying the teenager wasn’t at the scene that day. And one of them, Isaiah Tyson, said he, not Burrell, was the actual triggerman.

The investigation’s findings sparked national outrage and gave Burrell’s family and community organizers the ammunition needed to get Klobuchar’s attention. She said the case deserved a fresh look and called for the creation of the state’s conviction review unit – which received federal funding two months ago – to examine other questionable cases. Protecting the innocent was just as important as punishing the guilty,

she said.

Laura Nirider, co-director of the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University, and Barry Scheck, co-founder of the national Innocence Project, served as advisors to the panel, which included a former state attorney general, a former federal prosecutor, a member of the country’s first conviction integrity unit, and the past president of the national Innocence Network.

Several Minnesota organizations, including the state’s chapters of the NAACP and American Civil Liberties Union, also supported the panel’s efforts.

The report acknowledged the devastating impact that Tyesha’s death had on her family and the community, and said most of her surviving relatives chose not to comment about his recommended release from prison. One family member explained that the issue was “super touchy.”

But Tyesha’s biological father, Jimmie Edwards, said he hoped Burrell, who has already served 18 years, would remain behind bars.

“If you do the crime, you do the time,” he was quoted as telling the panel. “The guy is a thug, and his whole family is thugs ... he should have had his ass in school. I hope and pray they will not release him.”

Throughout the report, the panel pointed to troubling examples of “tunnel vision,” a term used when authorities build a narrative early in an investigation and zero-in on evidence that supports their theory of guilt while ignoring or suppressing anything that goes against it.

“It’s very common, especially when it comes to high-profile cases,” said Richard Rivera, a former New York police officer who exposed wrongdoing in his own force. “When something does get in our head, and pieces start to fall in place, then we have a tendency to either pursue those pieces or kind of make the square pegs fit in round holes sometimes.”

Though not speaking specifically about Burrell’s case, he said such a closed-minded mentality by investigators can shape the criminal proceedings as a whole, from prosecutions to plea deals.

Burrell’s name was first

brought to police two hours after the shooting. They got a jailhouse call from a well-known confidential informant, Isaac Hodge, who said the intended target of the shooting – a low-ranking member of Hodge’s gang – had implicated the teen. Panel members note that these jail calls to the eyewitness and police should have been recorded, but there is no indication they were, which was another key failing.

When Burrell was arrested and interrogated four days later, he told detectives he was at Cup Foods – the same store George Floyd visited in May just before his death in police custody.

Though Burrell told detectives to pull the store’s surveillance footage, there’s no evidence that ever happened, which the panel highlighted as another troubling example of tunnel vision. If Burrell was seen on the video, it could “only disconfirm” investigators’ theory that he was the killer, the panel wrote.

However, it was evident early on from jailhouse calls between Burrell and his mother that the teen believed the tapes had been recovered and that he would soon be going home. His mother – who died in a car crash after visiting him in jail three weeks later – reassured him, saying she had gone to Cup Foods with his sister and his girlfriend. She said the store owners told them the footage had already been handed over to the police.

“I bet you they already know I’m innocent!” Burrell is heard telling his mother on the recorded call from jail. “They just don’t know ... they ain’t found the right person. And they don’t want to let me go until they find him.”

Burrell’s case has also raised questions about the handling of other criminal investigations, particularly some involving young Black men and women.

“This is not an isolated incident, and we need to free the countless other men and women who have been wrongfully convicted,” said Leslie Redmond, the former president of the Minneapolis NAACP and founder of Don’t Complain, Activate. She said what happened to Burrell was “a shame and should be a crime.”

Boyfriend shows true colors after lung cancer diagnosis

DEAR ABBY: I need your opinion. I have been with the same guy for 27 years. We never married because we were both married before, and I wasn't into doing it again. I have stuck by him through sickness, hard times and whatever else.

Dear Abby



Four months ago I was diagnosed with small cell lung cancer. I stopped by his house this week to pick up a rug scrubber and walked in on him having sex with some woman. I feel hurt, angry, mad, sad. It's like, WHY? Do you think he has been doing this and he just got caught or what?

I didn't say anything. I just left. He called me later and said it was over between us because I'm sick and "can't do anything." I'm in shock. I don't know what to think. I have always been there for him. So why, now that I'm sick and I need him the most, has he turned his back on me? – Blindsided In Ohio

DEAR BLINDSIDED: I am so, so sorry that you had to find out this way – when the chips are down – that the man you have been involved with for 27 years isn't much of a man after all. I DO think he has been doing this all these years.

Now it is time to marshal your friends and family and let them know what's going on. If you have been a caring and supportive friend or relative, they should be supportive during this challenging time. The American Cancer Society has support groups for people with cancer if you need someone to talk to. Its website is cancer.org. Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers for both a spiritual and physical recovery.

DEAR ABBY: My family is getting torn apart by my older brother's issue with me. It has become worse over the years, even after his marriage.

He seems to be upset with how my life is progressing, and to upset me, he has been copying everything I do. He got engaged and married around the same time I did. He also got a dog right after I did, bought a car right after me and decided he wanted to start a family as soon as my wife and I announced we are having a baby.

My parents constantly make excuses about why his actions are justified. I no longer know what to do. I tried to reconcile with him, but he rebuffed me and says he hates me. It has reached the point that I don't want to be around any of my family anymore because they defend him on everything, despite the facts. What should I do? I seem to be the only person trying to reconcile the relationship and fix/reunite my family. – Sad Sibling In New Jersey

DEAR SIBLING: I find it hard to believe that your family would side with a sibling who declares he "hates" his brother and refuses attempts to reconcile. It's important for your mental health that you separate emotionally from your brother. By that I mean dial back the resentment, live your life with your wife and child and stop obsessing about what your brother does. That he literally follows in your footsteps shows he either admires the choices you make, or that he has no imagination of his own. Neither of these should be a problem for YOU.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Question starter
4 Material used in newer pipes
7 Dossier
11 Not just mine
12 Lascivious glance
14 Battery fluid
15 Notch shape
16 General vicinity
17 Hong —
18 Attempts
20 Delicate
22 I'm impressed!

23 Motor lodge
24 Pilot
27 Hair problem
30 Heavy metal
31 Leap in a tutu
32 O'Hare's airport code
34 Harry Potter's messenger

35 Govern
36 Luxuriant tresses
37 Go off the track
39 Jury
40 Checkout ID
41 Retiring
42 Papeete's island
45 Approximately
49 Chester — Arthur
50 Noted lava spewer
52 RV haven
53 Pepsi rival
54 Wheel tracks
55 Moray
56 Pay attention
57 — kwon do
58 Sneaky

DOWN
1 Used a loom
2 Shades
3 Mine yields
4 Band member
5 Stanza
6 Mediocre grade
7 Feigning

Answer to Previous Puzzle
W I S E T O E S F A R
A N K A O A T H U M A
D A I S O R C A J O N
E N L I S T S F O I S T
E L L A A T M
Y A C H T E D G E
E G O B A I L N A I L
A P E D B E A D M G M
R A R E I S S U E
K I N S I G H
G A P E D N E T T L E D
O R E L A I D H O L E
S I R E D N A E V E N
H A M R E A M R E N T

8 Desktop picture
9 Yarn fuzz
10 Nervous
13 Emit, as light
19 Made mellow
21 Mrs. Shakespeare
24 Ziegfeld nickname
25 Lascivious
26 Connecticut campus
27 Recount
28 Cash advance
29 Type of eagle
31 Riper, as a pear
33 Tierra — Fuego
35 Entranced
36 "Hold the —!"
38 Rendered useless
39 Expression
41 December 25 figure
42 Race car gauge
43 First-aid plant
44 Ocean fish
46 Hawaiian strings
47 Carol
48 "What's My Line?" host
51 Well-known pharaoh

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10
11				12			13		14		
15				16					17		
18				19			20	21			
			22				23				
24	25	26				27			28	29	
30						31			32	33	
34				35					36		
	37	38						39			
			40					41			
42	43	44				45			46	47	48
49					50	51			52		
53					54				55		
56						57			58		

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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ☆☆☆☆☆

4			1	3	7			8
3		1	4	5		2		6
						3		
			5	2				9
	3	6				5	8	
5				8	3			
		4						
7		3		4	1	6		5
6			3	7	9			1

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How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION								
1	3	7	2	6	8	4	5	9
6	5	8	9	4	7	2	1	3
2	9	4	5	3	1	8	7	6
8	1	3	6	5	9	7	2	4
4	2	5	8	7	3	9	6	1
7	6	9	1	2	4	5	3	8
5	7	1	4	9	6	3	8	2
3	4	6	7	8	2	1	9	5
9	8	2	3	1	5	6	4	7

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NOHMT

RDHOC

SSCXEE

OTYEPR

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12-9

Answers tomorrow

Saturday's Jumbles: SUEDE SALSA SNAZZY DEPICT

Answer: Saying, "Joe Montana threw for 273 NFL touchdowns," is an example of — "PASSED"-TENSE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

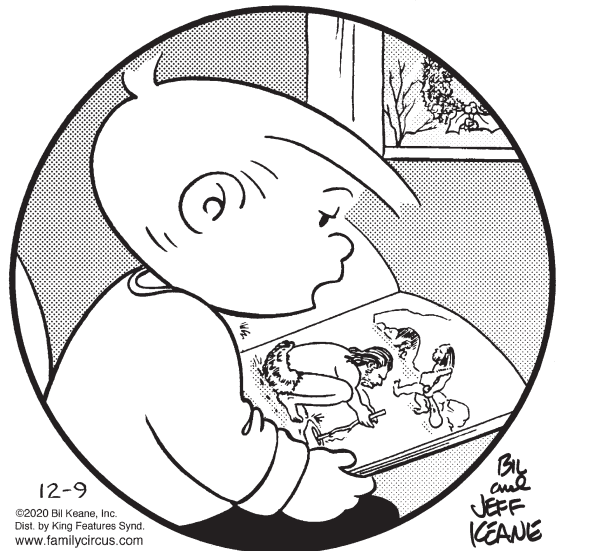


Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

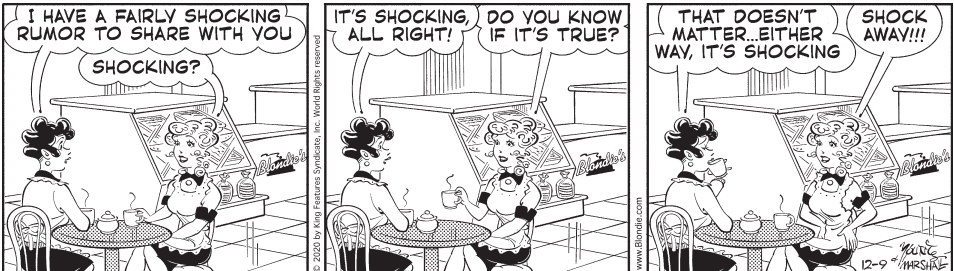


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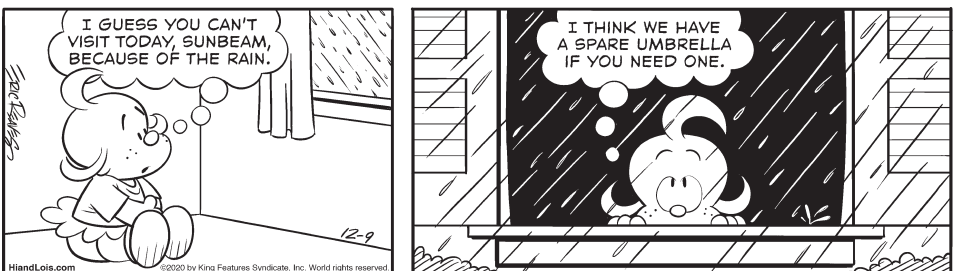
BEETLE BAILEY



BLONDIE



HI & LOIS



BC



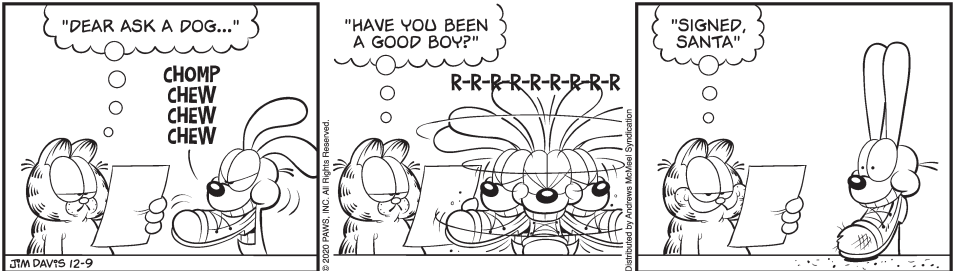
WIZARD OF ID



DILBERT



GARFIELD



FORT KNOX



PICKLES

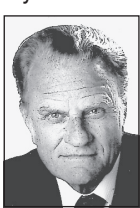


The game of golf reveals character

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham

Q: After being in lockdown for most of the year, my husband and I decided to retire and let the younger folks have a chance. While we haven't been able to go to church in person, we have enjoyed being out on the golf course. Is this wrong? – G.C.

Billy Graham My Answer



A: Golf can be a useful game. When the value of what may be considered a leisurely activity is explained, often it can relieve the buildup of anxiety. The Apostle Paul wrote about physical exercise and competition of his time. The game of golf reveals character. If a person is a good sport, or hot-headed, or dishonest, it will show

up on the golf course. The environment of God's landscape brings a certain serenity. A golf course is an island of peace in a world often full of confusion and turmoil. It's a good escape valve for inner hostility that builds up in all of us. It affords an opportunity for fellowship, challenge and exercise.

Golf techniques can be applied to life. "Keeping your head down," speaks of humility. The one who looks up eagerly and proudly is bound to be embarrassed.

Life is like that, too. "Keeping your eye on the ball," denotes resolution and concentration. "Following through" is a lesson in persistence. These principles can be applied in other areas of life and can serve us well. Let's always use our time to bring glory to Jesus Christ who has blessed us with multiple ways to enjoy what He has created for our enjoyment. Golf is a great pastime but we should be careful never to let it replace our worship of God.

CELEBRITY CIPHER

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

"POHN'J NOX BVWYTXU PMNO
'LXEXV'? MN DXXBJ ZWG KVVU
NVZMLF. MN XLJGVXJ NOHN ZWG PMTT
KHMT. XLC WK JNVVZ." – BOZTTMJ
FXWVFX

Previous Solution: "You've got to be original, because if you're like someone else, what do they need you for?" – Bernadette Peters
TODAY'S CLUE: a sɪmboʊl

Opinion

SPEAK UP

How to contact your legislators:

U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind.
B33 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
1-202-224-5623
<http://young.senate.gov/contact>

U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind.
B85 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4814
<http://braun.senate.gov/>

U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-District 2
419 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-3915

State Sen. Andy Zay, R-District 17
Indiana Senate
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9467
Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov

State Rep. David Wolkins, R-District 18
Indiana House
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9841
h18@in.gov

To email any Indiana lawmaker, go to this website:
www.in.gov/cgi-bin/legislative/contact/contact.pl

LETTERS GUIDELINES

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 99 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 99 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to news@wabashplaindealer.com with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.

DAILY SCRIPTURE

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

Trump's coup is a loser, too

The Trump era has introduced much of the lexicon of foreign correspondence to our domestic politics. The latest entry: failed coup. President Trump's putsch has been a sickly effort from the get-go, but his otherwise servile attorney general, William Barr, has effectively pronounced it dead. Since he auditioned for the job by advertising his eagerness to preemptively exonerate Trump of obstruction of justice, Barr has searched in vain for a presidential errand so distasteful that he wasn't willing to debase himself and his office to carry it out. He finally found that mission impossible this week, parting from Trump and rejoining reality by acknowledging that the Justice Department had "not seen fraud on

a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election." Losing Barr is about as dire a signal for Trump's cause as his feud with Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, whom the president has accused of insufficient commitment to overturning Joe Biden's victory there. Kemp isn't just a Trump-endorsed Republican; he's also a longtime champion of voter suppression. By 2018, when he was running for governor while serving as the state's top election official, he had purged more than a million voters from the rolls, inspiring opponent Stacey Abrams to redouble the organizing that helped flip the state to Biden. Nor is Barr the first member of the administration to refute allegations of an electoral crime spree. Last

month, officials with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency declared November's election the most secure in U.S. history, to which the president responded by firing the agency's director. Trump's legal team, meanwhile, has amassed a nearly flawless record of failure in its quixotic bid to throw out millions of votes in half a dozen states. Judging by a Trump lawyer's recent filing of an affidavit linked to the headquarters of the QAnon conspiracy theory, we can be comforted that the president's luck isn't about to change. Unfortunately, however, he and his remaining enablers are setting an antidemocratic precedent that will last longer than he does. *This editorial was first published in the San Francisco Chronicle.*

City Council: Our last redoubt

In Huntington, the powers that be are getting a little high-handed, so some residents are getting a little testy. It's politics at its best and worst. Late last month, the City Council passed an ordinance that, among other things, put some teeth in Gov. Holcomb's mask mandate. Police can issue a written warning to first-time violators and follow it up with a \$25 fine. Then, the fine will increase by \$50 for each repeated offense, which could get pretty expensive for the obstinately recalcitrant. That edict brought about 50 people out to protest in front of the Huntington County Courthouse what one attendee said was officials slowly but surely "taking our rights and our freedoms." Failed Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Donald Rainwater stopped by and urged the crowd to vote out council members "at the earliest opportunity." It was the worst of politics because the council overreacted, potentially putting already overworked police into the middle of something it really shouldn't have to fool with. Doesn't Huntington already have enough criminals without actively trying to create a whole new class of them? It was the best of politics because so many upset by the ordinance went into the "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore" mode. Fifty people is a lot for a city the size of Huntington. In our federal system, where power is diffused not only through the three branches of the federal government but also through various levels of government, we should want the most power exercised at the most local level, where officials have the most knowledge of our specific opportunities and challenges and, in theory, the ability to come up with the best solutions. And voters have the most control over local officials who go off the deep end. It is far easier to vote a councilman or mayor out of office than it is to boot out a governor, president or member of Congress. So, we should demand more home rule from state officials, less naked power from federal officials and fewer unfunded mandates from all of them. Local autonomy should be our anthem, with the less authority over money and our lives the further up the government ladder we go. Instead, we are upside down, with the people having the least understanding of our day-to-day needs making the most decisions over how we live our lives. And our state and federal governments have abused our trust at every turn. (This complaint is limited to government responses to COVID-19, as tempting as it is to do otherwise.) Federal officials, reacting to ever-changing pronouncements from "experts," issue edict after edict supposedly the only sane course to take no matter how much each one contradicts the last one. Our economy ends up wrecked for no good reason and our school systems shut down with lasting damage to our children. The president-in-waiting promises, on the day of his inauguration, 100 days of masking we know from experience will just go on and on. State officials insult us almost daily with "do as I say, not as I do" violations of their own quarantine orders. They put stricter rules on churches than on department stores. They sentence senior citizens to nursing home death traps. They grant social-distancing exceptions to "protesters" who stop traffic and set fire to buildings. Here in Indiana, legislators should be honestly examining their own actions, such as unconstitutionally giving the governor such sweeping emergency powers. Instead, they are using COVID-19 as an excuse to raise taxes (on cigarettes, this time), something they are normally deathly afraid to do. Local governments are the only ones that still have a shred of the faith citizens must invest for our experiment in self-rule to keep working. If that faith goes, if the last shred of trust is squandered, what do we do when an even worse pandemic hits, as it surely will? Fair warning. *Leo Morris, columnist for The Indiana Policy Review, is winner of the Hoosier Press Association's award for Best Editorial Writer. Morris, as opinion editor of the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel, was named a finalist in editorial writing by the Pulitzer Prize committee. Contact him at leodits@yahoo.com.*



The private sector is the hero of COVID-19

Over the coming years and inevitable slew of books on COVID-19 will identify villains and heroes, missteps and moments of prescient action. History will metaphorically adorn some with clown shoes, and others with halos. Like the Great Depression, World Wars, or 9/11, COVID-19 will bequeath us a before and after moment. Even as we return to a new normal, nearly all of us will speak of a life that preceded the pandemic and compare it to the life afterwards.

One important American institution that is sure to get less attention and praise than it deserves are those common and humdrum markets for goods and services. These most ubiquitous of human affairs, the buying and selling of products or labor, turned out to be the most significant and effective part of our COVID-19 response.

No doubt many a reader will be displeased at the notion that profit-maximizing firms were the fiber that held together the nation in the midst of the pandemic. However, this profit maximization may not be what is depicted in movies. Smart, successful businesses chase consumer interests. They listen to buyers, anticipate their needs and respond not out of charity or goodwill, but to make money. This doesn't make them uncharitable, just wise enough to understand that hiring workers and buying supplies takes more than goodwill.

In the process of making money, owners and managers seek to employ workers, protect their reputation and satisfy customers. While many folks may complain about shortages of toilet paper or bacon, the real story is how quickly and effectively businesses adapted to each and every stage of COVID-19.

From Feb. 26 to March 18, U.S. grocery store sales grew by more than 68 percent. From March 18 to 30, sales dropped down to 108 percent of average January sales. Americans

bought about three months' worth of groceries last March. Despite plenty of news articles about shortages, I've seen no evidence that corn cobs

replaced toilet paper, or squirrel stew comprised dinner for any American.

Michael Hicks



The health care industry entered the pandemic as the most monopolized sector of the U.S. economy since the Gilded Age. From March 13, when the national emergency was declared until April 1st, they quickly prepared for the pandemic. They postponed non-emergency procedures, and curtailed their most lucrative services, causing a 56 percent reducing in consumer spending on medical services. As damaging as hospital monopolies have been to many Indiana communities, we must be thankful for the speed with which hospitals responded to the pandemic.

The pandemic dramatically cut household spending on restaurants and hotels. By the end of March, consumer spending was down in this industry by 66 percent. It slowly recovered about half its lost sales after the CARES Act was passed. While the economic climate for restaurants and hotels has weakened in recent weeks as the disease expands, this sector faced the most daunting long-term effects of COVID-19. Still, over the past few months, the innovations in services are obvious almost everywhere. The growth of carry-out menus, the integration of food delivery services and the modifications to drive through restaurants offered decades of restaurant innovation in a matter of weeks.

Surely the most obvious example of private sector success was the development of a vaccine for COVID-19. Though governments in nearly every nation subsidized R&D, the first ef-

fective vaccine did not receive them. Surely, there's a lesson here.

All told, American businesses from the corner restaurant to large pharmaceutical firms have responded to COVID-19 very effectively. Over the long term, that response will limit damage to the lives and livelihoods of Americans. It also offers a living demonstration of why the United States remains economically ascendant.

The success of businesses depended on the coordination of millions of economic agents who often could have no idea of their role. For example, the quick response of the humble local grocery store depended upon the response of thousands of farms, livestock facilities, commodity sellers, fuel bulk shipment operations, refineries, railroad maintenance operations, truck dispatchers, pallet makers, website developers, logistic algorithm writers, lawyers and even accountants.

The actions of all these folks wasn't coordinated by the CDC or some mythical Department of Grocery Store Operations. It came from millions of vendor-managed inventory responses, calls from busy shipping clerks and purchasing managers all acting on the trust that is built in market exchange. Only the private sector can accomplish something like this, but the policy environment does matter.

Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University. Hicks earned doctoral and master's degrees in economics from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in economics from Virginia Military Institute. He has authored two books and more than 60 scholarly works focusing on state and local public policy, including tax and expenditure policy and the impact of Wal-Mart on local economies.

LETTERS

Thank you to mask-wearing voters

Poll workers had to consider an unknown level of risk when deciding to participate in this fall's election due to the coronavirus pandemic. Fortunately, the combination of enough workers who decided to take on the additional risk, the increase in absentee voters, and the amount of early voting all contributed to making the Nov. 3 elections a relatively normal experience.

My knowledge is not exhaustive, but nearly one month after the elections I am not aware of poll workers contracting the virus, and in my case a COVID-19 test detecting no virus.

The health precautions established at the voting locations appear to have worked. These precautions included the attempt of keeping space between people, having hand sanitizer available, having masks available, some degree of sanitation of items used in voting, in some cases increased airflow through the room and the wear-

ing of masks.

I and other poll workers at my location want to extend a special recognition to the approximately 97 percent of voters who entered the voting room wearing a mask. You mask-wearers deserve a very special thank you for caring about the health of our community.

John Hartsough, DVM North Manchester

How to fix the Electoral College

The debate has started again as to whether the U.S. Constitution should be amended to change the presidential election process. Some promote eliminating the Electoral College in favor of a direct popular vote for president while others believe the Electoral College should remain unchanged. Just as compromise solved the initial problems of the framers so it is that compromise can solve this problem. The solution is to change the electoral votes to electoral points and reward

each candidate a percentage of points based on the percentage of popular votes received in each state.

This would eliminate the "winner take all" system thus allowing for all the votes to count. A voter is more apt to believe their vote counted when a percentage of popular votes are taken into account rather than the "all or nothing" system currently in existence. Further, this new system would integrate the desire for a popular vote for president with the need for the individual states to determine who gets elected.

For 2020 multiplying the percentage of votes each candidate received in each state times the number of electoral votes in each state results in the following: Biden 267.23 and Trump 252.33. Multiplying the percentage of popular votes each candidate received nationwide times the total number of electoral votes 538 results in the following: Biden 274.92 and Trump 253.40.

Joe Bialek Cleveland



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PHYLLIS J. MEYER,
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any of the above-named persons
Whose names are unknown; and
The unknown lineal descendants of each and
all of the above-named defendants; the grant-
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atees, devisees, trustees and executors of the
last will and testament of may of the above-
named defendants who are dead, and of the
women once known by any of the names
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names and are now known by some other
name, the names of whom are unknown to the
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herein, the names of all of whom are unknown
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INFLR76A06749AT. Defendant, Lois
Christian-Deceased
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(3) 1984 Mansion. 24' x 48'. VIN# MD102782.
Defendant, Paul E. Meyer-
Deceased and Phyllis J. Meyer
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Homes. Any person claiming any interest in the
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days after the last notice of this action has
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uled for February 12, 2021 at 1:00 P.M. or a
judgment may be entered in favor of Plaintiff,
Monarch Communities Indiana, LLC, granting it
exclusive title to the aforesaid Mobile Homes.
Monarch Communities Indiana, LLC hereby
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Order of the Court instructing the Bureau of
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Respectfully Submitted,
/s/ Justin R. Wall
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White added to MU cross country, track and field coaching staff

His emphasis during the track and field season will be serving as sprints and jumps coach

By DILLON BENDER

Manchester University director of cross country and track and field Brian Cash-dollar has announced the addition of Andre White to his coaching staff.

White began his coaching duties Tuesday, Dec. 1. White will serve as an assistant cross country and track and field coach for the Spartans, with an emphasis on serving as the Manchester sprints and jumps coach during track and field season.

White arrives in North Manchester after serving as the graduate assistant track and field coach at NCAA

Division II-member Upper Iowa University, located in Fayette, Iowa. During his two-year stint with the Peacocks, White assisted in all areas of the track and field program, gaining experience with student athlete development, technique instruction, practice planning and recruiting.

Three of Coach White's athletes set new school records while five athletes became Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference qualifiers.

Before his two years at Upper Iowa, White spent one year as a volunteer assistant track and field coach at his



Andrew White arrives in North Manchester after serving as the graduate assistant track and field coach at NCAA Division II-member Upper Iowa University, located in Fayette, Iowa.

Provided photo

White earned his bachelor's degree in English with a certification in coaching from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 2017. He was also a member of the Pointers' track and field program, where he competed as a jumper and sprinter.

White earned a master's degree in sports administration from Upper Iowa University in 2020.

Dillon Bender is the sports information director for Manchester University.

Colts hoping Hilton's game is on the rise

By MICHAEL MAROT

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — T.Y. Hilton waited 11 games to catch his first touchdown pass from Philip Rivers.

Now he has two in two weeks, his first 100-yard game in almost two years, and the four-time Pro Bowler seems to be finding his groove. The timing couldn't be better as the Indianapolis Colts fight for a playoff berth.

"Sort of, yeah," Hilton said when asked if Sunday's game plan was designed around his play-making skills. "It was just trying to get me going and there's no better place to do it than here (Houston). It got me going, got me flowing, and it got the offense going."

The successes of Hilton and the Colts have gone hand in hand most of the last nine seasons. But Indy (8-4) needed everything the 31-year-old receiver could muster to get past the Texans 26-20.

He caught an 18-yard pass on Indy's first play. He finished the first drive with a nifty 21-yard catch-and-run play for his second score of the season. He kept Indy's second scoring drive alive with a twisting, 21-yard, third-down reception that was originally ruled out of bounds. And his 16-yard catch late in the first half set up a 42-yard field goal to give Indy a 24-17 lead.

The impact Hilton made was evident on the stat sheet. In the first half, he caught seven passes for 100 yards when Indy scored a season-high 24 points. He caught one pass for 10 yards in the second half when Indy's offense was shut out.

But his presence looms larger than numbers.

"When you see him make a play, the sideline just gets electric because of the guy he is in the locker room," rookie running back Jonathan Taylor said. "So when he makes a play, he gets the offense and the defense going."

Hilton has showed flashes earlier this season. He had four catches for 53 yards in a season-opening loss at Jacksonville, and six catches for 69 yards in the loss at Cleveland.

But after catching four passes for a season-high 81 yards against Tennessee and topping those numbers at Houston, Hilton may finally be on track for a strong finish — like the Colts need.

"I feel like we've said it all year long, it's just a matter of time till he really gets rolling," quarterback Philip Rivers said. "I know it's not the same statistics that we're used to seeing him have. But he had a huge day."

What's working

Indy's second-half defense has been virtually impenetrable, allowing 7.33 points over the final two quarters after shutting out Houston for the final 30 minutes Sunday.

What needs help

The first-half defense. As incredibly stout as Indy has been in the second half, the slow starts remain a mystery. Indy has been outscored 100-65 in the first half over the past four weeks.

Stock up

Defensive end Justin Houston isn't making sacks at the same rate he was in 2014 when he nearly broke the NFL's single-season record. But as the Texans learned, he's still a dominant pass rusher. Houston had three sacks,

scored the only second-half points on a safety, and retook the team lead with 7 1/2 sacks.

Stock down

RB Nyheim Hines had six carries for 10 yards and one TD as well as three receptions for 22 yards at Houston. He would have been much happier, though, if two long punt returns weren't negated by penalties.

Injured

Offensive lineman Le'Raven Clark will miss the rest of the season after tearing his left Achilles tendon. That leaves Indy's already short-handed line even thinner. Clark had replaced left tackle Anthony Castonzo (sprained MCL) in the starting lineup.

Key number

5 — Officially, Houston got his fourth career safety, naturally in Houston. But the 31-year-old defensive end contends he doesn't share the NFL record with Ted Hendricks, Doug English and Jared Allen. He owns it.

"When I was playing with Kansas City, we were in Denver and I got a sack-fumble in the end zone, but they gave it to the team instead of me," Houston said with a chuckle. "I still don't understand why they didn't give it to me. So I feel like I have five. I think that's my safety, so in my mind and in my household I have five."

Next steps

Sunday's trip to Las Vegas could help determine Indy's playoff fate. The Colts currently trail Tennessee in the AFC South, based on division record, and have the loss to the Browns. A win over the Raiders could give Indy a crucial advantage as a tiebreaker.

No. 8 Hoosiers maintain focus as team, coach grow

By MICHAEL MAROT

Associated Press

Indiana coach Tom Allen makes his philosophy clear every day.

He recruits hard, prioritizes personal relationships, demands focus and accountability inside the locker room, and shares the credit. Here, the quest for moral victories is replaced by hard work, toughness, an unwavering standard of excellence and achievements on and off the field.

They are principles most athletic directors seek from their coaches, especially those with winning track records. And right now, with the eighth-ranked Hoosiers having their best season in decades, everybody seems to want to jump on board and sing Allen's praises.

"You recruits, come play for this man, best coach in America," offensive lineman Dylan Powell said softly Saturday, briefly interrupting Allen's on-field interview after a 14-6 victory at Wisconsin.

"Best coach in the nation right here, let's go!" running back Stevie Scott III shouted.

The touching clip of one Indiana player after another stopping to hug Allen, jump on him or laud him for what he's achieved in four full seasons as a college head

coach made the rounds on highlight shows all weekend.

It also started a conversation about what could be next for Allen — national coach of the year, a higher-profile job?

Allen, of course, prefers the debate to stop there because he still has unfinished business.

Next week, the Hoosiers (6-1) will be playing for their first Big Ten championship since 1967 — if the Michigan-Ohio State game is canceled — and Indiana is still chasing its first bowl win since 1991.

The more immediate task is beating Purdue to retain the Old Oaken Bucket.

"I've seen the game a lot, always watched it," Allen said Monday. "Sometimes you've got high school teammates playing against each other. You've got families divided. It's personal, you know, because there's a whole year of bragging rights and it can change your whole season. So it's a big game for both teams and it means a lot to the fan bases. It's huge. It means a whole bunch to me."

The 50-year-old Allen understands the significance because he grew up in Indiana, playing football for his father at New Castle High School near the Ohio state line. The same school

produced two other well-known Hoosiers — national championship-winning basketball stars Kent Benson and Steve Alford.

Allen, like his father, coached high school football in Indiana and took his first college coaching job at Division III Wabash College, an all-men's school located 50 miles northwest of Indianapolis.

So when he was offered the defensive coordinator's job at Indiana in 2016, he jumped at the opportunity. By the end of his first season, athletic director Fred Glass made a coaching change, promoting Allen in part because of the bond Allen had with his players.

"He's authentic, I'd say that's his greatest quality," Glass said recently. "He's the same guy on the sideline as he is when he's talking to the coaches, when he's talking to the kids and the kids respond to that."

This season's achievements prove it.

Indiana beat Michigan and Penn State in the same season for the first time, snapping a 24-game skid against the Wolverines. They've tied one single-season school record with three wins over ranked teams and another with seven consecutive weeks in the Top 25.

Some believe Allen could

soon be on the short list of more prominent programs. Rumors about possible openings at schools such as Michigan and Southern California, Tennessee and Texas abound.

It's not clear Allen would even be interested.

Last December, he signed a seven-year contract extension that more than doubled his average annual salary to \$3.9 million. The deal included more money for his assistants and a provision that adds one year to the deal for each bowl appearance the Hoosiers make.

Allen insists coaching has never been about the money. He's gotten emotional when talking about the relationships he's developed over the years and choked back tears recently while explaining the sacrifices his wife and children endured for his career.

"We wanted our children to get a great education and be a part of a good community each time we moved and find a good church and help them to continue to develop," Allen said. "That was really the focus and I was concerned about that. And, obviously, pay for all of the debt we created over the years of buying and selling homes that we lost money on, which is what you do when you live there for eight months."

SCOREBOARD

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Indiana High School Basketball Poll

Class 4A

	W-L	Pts	Prv
1. Lawrence North (8)	1-0	268	1
2. Carmel (5)	3-0	254	2
3. Homestead (1)	3-0	183	NR
4. Indianapolis Attucks	3-0	168	10
5. Indpls Cathedral	3-1	120	4
6. Lafayette Jeff	4-0	109	9
7. Warren Central	1-1	92	5
8. Munster	0-0	88	7
9. Brownsburg	1-1	85	3
10. Westfield	2-0	73	NR

Others receiving votes:

New Albany 56. S. Bend Adams 34. Fishers 29. Franklin Central 28. Columbus North 17. Lawrence Central 16. Gary West 16. Floyd Central 13. Chesterton 12. Plainfield 7. Indpls Pike 6. S. Bend Riley 6.

Class 3A

	W-L	Pts	Prv
1. Silver Creek (14)	3-0	280	1
2. Heritage Hills	2-0	222	2
3. Ev. Bosse	2-0	166	9
4. Greensburg	0-0	162	5
5. S. Bend St. Joseph's	1-1	147	3
6. Indpls Brebeuf	2-1	138	6
7. Danville	0-0	134	7
8. Hammond	0-1	124	8
9. Mishawaka Marian	1-1	119	4
10. Delta	1-0	74	10

Others receiving votes:

Sullivan 44. Western 18. Heritage Christian 18. Beech Grove 14. Brownstown 13. Leo 7.

Class 2A

	W-L	Pts	Prv
1. FW Blackhawk (13)	3-0	278	1
2. Linton-Stockton (1)	3-0	242	2
3. Blackford	3-0	199	4
4. Shenandoah	0-0	198	3
5. S. Spencer	4-0	176	5
6. Central Noble	2-0	110	9
7. Westview	2-1	107	8
8. Indpls Covenant	1-0	80	T10
9. University	2-1	78	7
10. S. Decatur	0-1	53	6

Others receiving votes:

Parke Heritage 43. Southwestern (Jefferson) 33. Bowman Academy 18. Andean 16. Indpls Park Tudor 16. Tipton 15. Ev. Mater Dei 12. Clinton Prairie 6.

Class 1A

	W-L	Pts	Prv
1. Barr-Reeve (9)	1-0	270	2
2. Kouts (4)	4-0	250	1
3. Loogootee (1)	4-0	230	3
4. Covington	0-0	173	5
5. Bloomfield	2-0	151	7
6. Morristown	1-0	111	9
7. Lafayette Catholic	1-2	85	4
8. Gary 21st Century	1-2	84	6
9. Greenwood Christian	1-1	81	8
10. N. Daviess	1-0	77	10

Others receiving votes:

Edinburgh 54. Christian Academy 36. Tindley 36. Providence Cristo Rey 18. W. Washington 12. Tri-Central 6. Washington Twp. 6.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

AP Top 25 Men's Basketball Poll

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 6, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. Gonzaga (54)	3-0	1518	1
2. Baylor (7)	3-0	1470	2
3. Iowa	3-0	1385	3
4. Michigan St.	5-0	1296	8
5. Kansas	4-1	1195	7
6. Illinois	3-1	1104	5
7. Houston	4-0	1090	10
8. Creighton	3-0	1068	9
9. Villanova	4-1	1033	12
10. Duke	2-1	954	6
11. West Virginia	4-1	918	11
12. Tennessee	0-0	767	13
13. Wisconsin	3-1	750	4
13. Texas	4-1	750	17
15. Virginia Tech	4-0	688	16
16. North Carolina	3-1	547	14
17. Texas Tech	4-1	544	17
18. Virginia	3-1	471	15
19. Richmond	2-0	419	19
20. Florida St.	1-0	350	22
21. Rutgers	3-0	293	24
22. Ohio St.	3-0	287	23
23. Arizona St.	3-1	218	25
24. San Diego St.	4-0	123	-
25. Louisville	4-0	122	-

Others receiving votes: Michigan 107, Saint Louis 94, Florida 90, Indiana 40, Oregon 26, Oklahoma St. 26, Marquette 22, Missouri 19, UConn 12, Xavier 9, Clemson 7, Alabama 5, Washington St. 3, Maryland 2, UCLA 1, SMU 1, Oklahoma 1.

AP Top 25 Women's Basketball Poll

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' women's college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 6, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. Stanford (24)	3-0	740	2
2. Louisville (2)	4-0	689	5
3. UConn (2)	0-0	675	3
4. NC State (2)	4-0	670	8
5. South Carolina	3-0	605	1
6. Arizona	3-0	605	7
7. Baylor	2-1	552	4
8. Oregon	4-0	525	10
9. Kentucky	4-0	504	11
10. Texas A&M	4-0	463	12
11. UCLA	2-1	452	9
12. Mississippi St.	2-1	413	6
13. Arkansas	5-1	409	16
14. Maryland	3-1	342	14
15. Indiana	2-1	304	13
15. Oregon St.	3-0	304	17
17. Northwestern	0-0	271	15
18. Ohio St.	3-0	191	19
19. Michigan	3-0	170	24
20. Syracuse	3-0	169	22
21. Missouri St.	2-1	162	21
22. South Dakota St.	3-0	104	-
23. Texas	3-1	69	25
24. DePaul	1-2	63	20
25. Gonzaga	1-2	62	18

Others receiving votes: South Florida 59, Iowa St. 54, North Carolina 38, Arizona St. 12, Notre Dame 8, West Virginia 6, Wake Forest 5, Boston College 4, Ohio 4, Georgia 3, Virginia Tech 2.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

AP Top 25

The Top 25 teams in The Associated Press college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Dec. 5, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote, and previous ranking:

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. Alabama (62)	9-0	1550	1
2. Notre Dame	10-0	1482	2
3. Ohio St.	5-0	1407	3
4. Clemson	9-1	1387	4
5. Texas A&M	7-1	1274	5
6. Florida	8-1	1233	6
7. Cincinnati	8-0	1204	7
8. Indiana	6-1	1047	10
9. Miami	8-1	1039	9
10. Iowa St.	8-2	947	12
11. Coastal Carolina	10-0	923	14
12. Georgia	6-2	914	11
13. Oklahoma	7-2	837	13
14. BYU	9-1	713	8
15. Northwestern	5-1	647	16
16. Southern Cal	3-0	624	17
17. Louisiana-Lafayette	9-1	560	20
18. Tulsa	6-1	444	22
19. Iowa	5-2	424	-
20. North Carolina	7-3	306	24
21. Colorado	4-0	253	23
22. Liberty	9-1	191	25
23. Texas	6-3	164	-
24. Buffalo	4-0	145	-
25. Wisconsin	2-2	115	18

Others receiving votes: NC State 98, Marshall 66, San Jose St. 66, Oklahoma St. 33, UCF 11, Boise St. 10, Washington 10, Auburn 9, Missouri 8, Nevada 5, Army 2, UCLA 1, TCU 1.

Standings

Atlantic Coast Conference

	W	L	PF	PA	W	L	PF	PA
Notre Dame	9	0	325	171	10	0	377	171
Clemson	8	1	411	183	9	1	460	183
Miami	7	1	283	184	8	1	314	198

NC State	7	3	327	313	8	3	342	327
North Carolina	6	3	362	277	7	3	411	286
Wake Forest	3	3	209	194	4	3	275	208
Virginia	4	4	237	248	5	4	292	263
Boston College	5	5	282	291	6	5	306	312
Pittsburgh	4	5	230	250	5	5	285	250
Virginia Tech	4	5	274	300	4	6	309	338
Georgia Tech	3	5	198	285	3	6	219	334
Louisville	2	7	245	251	3	7	280	272
Florida St.	1	6	135	265	2	6	176	289
Duke	1	8	185	344	2	8	238	363
Syracuse	1	9	175	322	1	10	196	360

Big Ten Conference

East

Conference

All Games

U.K. starts virus campaign with a shot watched round the world

By **DANICA KIRKA**
Associated Press

LONDON — A nurse rolled up 90-year-old Margaret Keenan’s sleeve and administered a shot watched round the world — the first jab in the U.K.’s COVID-19 vaccination program kicking off an unprecedented global effort to try to end a pandemic that has killed 1.5 million people.

Keenan, a retired shop clerk from Northern Ireland who celebrates her birthday next week, was at the front of the line at University Hospital Coventry to receive the vaccine that was approved by British regulators last week.

The U.K. is the first Western country to deliver a broadly tested and independently reviewed vaccine to the general public. The COVID-19 shot was developed by U.S. drugmaker Pfizer and Germany’s BioNTech. U.S. and European Union regulators may approve it in the coming days or weeks.

“All done?” Keenan asked nurse May Parsons. “All done,” came the reply, as hospital staff broke into applause and also clapped for her as she was wheeled down a corridor.

“I feel so privileged to be the first person vaccinated against COVID-19,” said Keenan, who wore a surgical mask and a blue “Merry Christmas” T-shirt with a cartoon penguin in a Santa hat. “It’s the best early birthday present I could wish for because it means I can finally look forward to spending time with my family and friends in the New Year after being on my own for most of the year.”

The second injection, in a fitting bit of drama, went to an 81-year-old man named William Shakespeare from Warwickshire, the county where the bard was born.

The fanfare was good cheer to the nation, if but for a moment. Authorities warned that the vaccination campaign would take many months, meaning painful restrictions that have disrupted daily life and punished the economy are likely to continue until spring. The U.K. has seen over 61,000 deaths in the pandemic — more than any other country in Europe — and has recorded more than 1.7 million confirmed cases.

“This really feels like the beginning of the end,” said Stephen Powis, medical director for the National Health Service in England. “It’s been a really dreadful year, 2020 — all those things that we are so used to, meeting friends and family, going to the cinema, have been disrupted. We can get those back. Not tomorrow. Not next week. Not next month. But in the months to come.”

But it is important beyond these shores. Britain’s program is likely to provide lessons for other countries as they prepare for the unprecedented task of vaccinating billions.

On Saturday, Russia began vaccinations with its Sputnik V vaccine, and China has also begun giving its own domestically made shots to its citizens and selling them abroad. But those are being viewed differently because neither countries’ vaccines have finished the late-stage trials scientists consider essential for proving a serum is safe and effective.

Other vaccines are also being reviewed by regulators around the world, including a collaboration between Oxford University and drugmaker AstraZeneca and one developed by U.S. biotechnology company Moderna.

Documents released by U.S. regulators Tuesday confirmed that Pfizer’s vaccine was strongly protective against COVID-19 and appeared safe. New results on a possible vaccine from Oxford University and drugmaker AstraZeneca suggest it is safe and about 70 percent effective, according to early test results from Britain and Brazil. But that report, in the medical journal Lancet, showed that questions remain about how well it helps protect those over 55.

British regulators approved the Pfizer shot Dec. 2, and the country has received 800,000 doses, enough to vaccinate 400,000 people. The first shots are going to people over 80 who are either hospitalized or already have outpatient appointments scheduled, along with nursing home workers and vaccination staff.

Others must wait, and health officials have said that those who are most at risk from the virus will be vaccinated in the early stages. For most people, it will be next year before there is enough vaccine to expand the program.

U.K. health officials have worked for months to adapt a system geared toward vaccinating groups like school children and pregnant women into one that can rapidly reach much of the population.

Questions arose about when the country’s most prominent senior couple — Queen Elizabeth II, 94, and her husband, Prince Philip, 99 — would get the vaccine and whether it would happen on camera.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab appeared nonplussed when he was asked about it by NBC.

“I’m not sure whether they’d do it on camera,” Raab said. “But I’m sure arrangements will be made according to the phased approach that I set out, and like any family, they would have felt the pressures and all the worries that surround this pandemic as well.”

The 800,000 doses are only a fraction of what is needed in the U.K. The government is targeting more than 25 million people, or about 40 percent of the population, in the first phase of its vaccination program, which gives first priority to those at highest risk from the virus.

The program will be expanded when supply increases, with the vaccine offered roughly on the basis of age groups, starting with the oldest. Britain plans to offer vaccines to everyone over the age of 50, as well as younger adults with health conditions that put them at greater risk.

In England, the vaccine is being delivered to 50 hospital hubs in the first wave of the program, with more hospitals expected to offer it as the rollout ramps up. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are making their own plans under the U.K.’s system of devolved administration.

Logistical issues are slowing the distribution of the Pfizer vaccine because it has to be stored at minus-94 degrees Fahrenheit. Authorities are focusing on large-scale distribution points because each package of vaccine contains 975 doses and they don’t want any to be wasted.

The U.K. has agreed to buy more than 350 million doses from seven different producers. Governments around the world are making agreements with multiple developers to ensure they lock in delivery of the products that are ultimately approved for widespread use.

Ethiopia’s forces shoot at, detain U.N. staffers in Tigray

By **CARA ANNA**
Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Ethiopia’s security forces shot at and detained United Nations staffers as they tried to reach part of the embattled Tigray region, a senior official said Tuesday, and he blamed the U.N. staffers for trying to reach areas where “they were not supposed to go.”

The shooting occurred amid soaring frustration among humanitarian officials as desperately needed aid is still not freely reaching the Tigray region more than a week after the U.N. and Ethiopia’s government signed a deal for access.

The senior government official, Redwan Hussein, told reporters that the U.N. employees “broke” two checkpoints and were trying to go through a third when they were fired upon. He said the staffers have since been released.

“They were told in some areas they were not supposed to move. But they indulged themselves in a kind of adventurous expedition,” he said.

United Nations spokesman Stephane Dujarric called the report “alarming” and said U.N. officials “are engaging at the highest level with the federal government to express our concerns and avoid any such incidents in the future.”

He said the four U.N. staffers on Sunday had been trying to assess roads, a key step before larger aid convoys can go in. Another U.N. spokesman, Farhan Haq, said the staffers were stopped at a military checkpoint near

Sheraro. The town is near the Eritrean border.

Ethiopia’s government is making it clear it intends to manage the flow of humanitarian aid, but the U.N. has openly sought unfettered and neutral access according to international principles.

“The situation on the ground is complicated” at the local level, Dujarric said, and discussions continue with the government “to try to get where we want to be.”

Crucially, the deal allows aid only in areas under Ethiopian government control. The government on Tuesday said 44 truckloads of food aid had been delivered to Shire, the main town near the refugee camps.

Ethiopia’s government late last month declared victory in the conflict in the Tigray region against the Tigray People’s Liberation Front. The government asserts that the fighting has stopped except for some “sporadic shootings,” but the TPLF has said fighting continues. The TPLF leaders are on the run.

Food, medicines and other aid for some 6 million people — some 1 million of them now displaced — are in the balance. Of special concern are camps that are home to nearly 100,000 refugees from Eritrea amid reports that they have been attacked and abducted. The camps are near the border with Eritrea, which some fleeing people have accused of entering the conflict, a charge that Ethiopia denies.

Food ran out at the camps days ago.

“Regaining access to refugees and others in need is urgent and critical for UN-

HCR and humanitarian organizations,” the head of the U.N. refugee agency, Filippo Grandi, tweeted Tuesday.

The head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, Jan Ege-land, said his organization is “deeply concerned to find that humanitarian access to the region is still significantly constrained. ... These people can no longer be made to wait. Aid must not be left at a standstill. We have been standing ready to deliver food, emergency shelter and other essential materials for weeks, and we expected this deal to clear the way.”

The U.N. announced the deal with Ethiopia’s government last Wednesday, saying it was signed on Nov. 29.

The fighting in the region erupted Nov. 4 between Ethiopia’s government and the government of the Tigray region following months of rising tensions. Since then, aid-laden trucks have waited at the borders of Tigray, even as warnings have become increasingly dire about the lack of food, fuel, clean water, cash and other necessities.

“Full access for humanitarian actors must be guaranteed,” EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell tweeted Tuesday.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s office said Monday it was working with the U.N. and others to extend humanitarian assistance “with a well-coordinated framework led by the federal government.”

On Tuesday, Redwan repeated that message and added: “No entity, multilateral or unilateral, is supposed to supplant the government. ... We, the government, would

call the shots.”

Humanitarian assistance must be escorted by defense forces, he said.

Even after Abiy declared victory on Nov. 28 in what he called a “law enforcement operation” against a Tigray government he now considers illegitimate, fighting has been reported in parts of the region, further complicating access for aid.

Thousands of people are thought to have been killed in the power struggle between the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, which dominated Ethiopia’s government and military for more than a quarter-century, and the government of Abiy, who sidelined the TPLF soon after taking power in 2018 and introduced dramatic political reforms that won him the Nobel Peace Prize.

Now Abiy rejects dialogue with the TPLF. Both sides began the conflict heavily armed, leading to fears of another drawn-out conflict in the strategic Horn of Africa nation that is the continent’s second-most populous country.

Nearly 50,000 Ethiopians have fled into neighboring Sudan, where another humanitarian crisis is growing as aid workers set up food, shelter and other care from scratch.

“It has been a month since I have taken my pills,” said one refugee, Aksamawet Garazgerer, who said she has HIV and needs antiretrovirals. “I would go every day (to the clinic) and they say tomorrow it will come, the day after tomorrow it will come. But it has not come yet.”

China condemns new U.S. Hong Kong sanctions, Taiwan arms sale

BEIJING (AP) — China lashed out at the U.S. on Tuesday over new American sanctions against Chinese officials for their actions in Hong Kong, along with the sale of more U.S. military equipment to Taiwan, moves touching on two of the most sensitive issues in the increasingly contentious relationship between the nations.

The foreign ministry summoned Washington’s top diplomat in China to express “strong indignation and strong condemnation.”

The U.S. actions “seriously violated the basic norms of international relations, seriously interfered in China’s domestic politics, seriously damaged China-U.S. relations, are arrogant, unreasonable and vile,” Vice Foreign Minister Zheng Zeguang was quoted as telling Deputy Chief of Mission Robert Ford.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying also condemned the new sanctions leveled against 14 officials in the standing committee of China’s legislature, which passed a sweeping Hong Kong National Security Law earlier this year.

China will “take resolute and forceful countermeasures and resolutely defend its sovereignty, security and development interests,” Hua said at a daily briefing.

The State Department on Monday said the 14 officials will be banned from traveling to the U.S. or accessing the U.S. financial system over actions in Hong Kong seen as squelching free speech and opposition

politics.

It also announced the approval of a \$280 million sale of advanced military communications equipment to Taiwan.

China passed the National Security Law as part of a campaign to impose tighter control and drive foreign political influence from Hong Kong, a former British colony that was handed back to China in 1997 with a promise it could retain its relatively liberal political, legal and economic systems for 50 years.

Harsh suppression of months of increasingly violent anti-government protests last year led to unyielding enforcement of the law, including the arrest of leading government opponents and the expulsion of four opposition members of the Legislative Council. That prompted the rest of the opposition bloc to resign en masse, while Washington leveled sanctions at leading figures in both the Hong Kong government and related Chinese government departments.

In his comments to Ford, Zheng said U.S. expressions of concern for democracy, human rights and autonomy in Hong Kong were merely cover for its real goals of spreading chaos in the territory and stifling China’s stability and development.

That, he said, proved Washington was the “black hand” behind disorder in Hong Kong, repeating a frequent Chinese accusation rejected by the U.S.

The U.S. Embassy in Beijing described the meeting as a chance to express U.S.

concern over the National Security Law.

Ford “noted that Beijing has used the law repeatedly to suppress freedom of expression and assembly in Hong Kong and to arrest Hong Kong residents who have raised peacefully their concerns over Beijing’s oppressive policies,” the embassy said in a statement on its website.

The dispute over Hong Kong comes as China is upping military and diplomatic pressure on Taiwan, a self-governing island democracy that Beijing claims as its own territory, to be annexed by force if necessary. Hua demanded the U.S. cancel its latest arms sale to Taiwan and said China would make a “proper and necessary response.”

President Donald Trump’s administration has incensed Beijing with 11 separate arms sales and closer military and political ties with the island.

China has responded with stepped-up military flights and wargames near Taiwan and pledged to punish U.S. companies involved in arms deals with the island. It has sought to poach Taiwan’s dwindling number of diplomatic allies while blocking the island from participating in international medical, economic and other organizations, demanding that President Tsai Ing-wen first recognize that the island is Chinese territory.

Taiwan’s government welcomed the sale of U.S. military equipment, saying it showed Washington is honoring its commitment to bolster the island’s

defenses.

“Taiwan has been at the receiving end of such military threats on a daily basis,” Tsai told reporters. “Only through engagement and by working together can we tackle the threats and challenges that beset our region and the world.”

The U.S. earlier imposed sanctions on Chinese officials implicated in abuses against Muslim minority groups in the northwestern region of Xinjiang. It has also gone after Chinese companies as part of a feud over trade and alleged pilfering of intellectual property, last week adding China’s biggest maker of processor chips and a state-owned oil giant to a blacklist that limits its access to American technology and investment.

Earlier this year, the U.S. also forced the closure of the Chinese consulate in Houston — prompting China to shutter the U.S. consulate in the southwestern city of Chengdu — and last week, it cut the duration of U.S. visas for members of China’s ruling Communist Party and their family members from 10 years to one month.

The Trump administration appears to be using Taiwan, Hong Kong and other issues to heighten the level of confrontation in China-U.S. relations, said Su Hao, professor of international relations at China Foreign Affairs University.

“Trump would like to see a formation of a solidified structure of China-U.S. relations that will make it difficult for (President-elect Joe Biden) to make changes,” Su said.



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